



# THE BRAILLE MONITOR

Voice of the  
National Federation of the Blind

FEBRUARY - 1972

The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind—it is the blind speaking for themselves.

### THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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If you or a friend wish to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, a District of Columbia non-profit corporation, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_ (or, "\_\_\_\_ percent of my net estate", or "the following stocks and bonds: \_\_\_\_") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons and to be held and administered by direction of its Executive Committee."

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR  
FEBRUARY, 1972

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## ARKANSAS REORGANIZES

by

Mary Ellen Anderson

Preceded by a statewide membership drive, the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas, an expanded and revitalized affiliate, came into being at the Coachman's Inn in Little Rock on Saturday, December 11, 1971.

The organizational campaign followed the established pattern of affiliate rebuilding which has now become an integral part of the Federation arsenal. The organizing team (named and notified during the closing days of November by President Jernigan) began assembling on Friday, December 3rd. Jan Omvig of Boise, Idaho, and Loren Schmitt of Chicago joined Peggy Pinder and me in Des Moines. Enroute to Little Rock Peggy undertook to make women liberationists of Jan and me, while Loren attempted to make Federationists of the airline personnel. Meanwhile, I stuck to more practical matters--bartering the sandwiches and potato salad on my snack tray for cookies. Arriving in Little Rock we met Ed and Hazel Hill of Missouri and Dick Edlund of Kansas. Arlene Gashel arrived on Sunday from Des Moines to round out the team. Alpha Ennis, state president for the past year, and a dedicated Federationist, met with us late Friday evening and into the early hours of Saturday morning laying the plans for the week ahead. Armed with NFB literature, enthusiasm, and determination we set to work contacting blind persons. All of us worked in Little Rock on Saturday. By Sunday afternoon we had begun dispersing throughout the state--Loren, Dick, Hazel and Jan to Conway, Searcy, Fort Smith and Fayetteville; Ed to Pine Bluff; Arlene

and Peggy remaining to man the Little Rock headquarters; me to Hot Springs. (We drew straws to determine which of us got to go to that famed resort city of hot thermal baths.)

As the week progressed the urgent need for the blind of Arkansas to have an active organization with an independent voice of its own became readily apparent. High on the list of items requiring attention was the necessity of finding ways to expand employment opportunities beyond the narrow scope of vending stand operation and sheltered shop work.

The manpower (and, yes Peggy, the woman power, too) to establish such an organization began to emerge. The NFB of Arkansas's first new chapter was formed on Wednesday in Hot Springs. On organizing expeditions the formation of local chapters is always the goal. The establishment of a chapter in Hot Springs, however, I regarded as a do or die proposition. How else could I convince the rest of the team that I hadn't been relaxing in the thermal baths while they worked away?

By Friday evening all of the team had returned to Little Rock. Awaiting the arrival of President Jernigan's plane from Des Moines, we exchanged notes and took stock of the week's work. It was clear that the organizing convention would be successful and well attended.

Early Saturday morning NFB board member Jim Couts and Eileen Edlund joined us to participate in the day's events. Then the delegates began assembling. Charles and Peggy Ledbetter and Henry Trimble were the first to arrive--by bus

from Hot Springs at 6:30 a.m. More were soon to follow. A mood of enthusiasm and determination spread quickly through the growing crowd.

Promptly at 10:00 a.m. President Jernigan called the meeting to order. A motion to dissolve the existing affiliate, the Arkansas Federation of the Blind, was offered and passed. The history, structure, goals and accomplishments of the NFB—including our recent victories in the Keener, Weckerly, and Schmitt court battles were presented to the group by President Jernigan. Asked what ought to be the relationship between an organization of the blind and an agency *for* the blind, the President replied, "Cooperation with when possible, but never domination by." That answer, judging from the resounding applause, seemed to bear special significance to those present.

A local television station filmed an interview with Mr. Jernigan at the beginning of the afternoon session and portions of the NFB's new Christmas record were played. In keeping with the trend sweeping through the Federation, the name National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas was selected. Next came the adoption of a constitution and the election of officers and board members. Ralph Sanders of Little Rock was elected president. Totally blind since childhood, Ralph is a partner in Concept-Three, an advertising, public relations and marketing firm. A graduate of the Arkansas School for the Blind, he received a B.A. in journalism from San Fernando Valley State College in California, graduating with highest departmental honors. He also holds a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University. At both institutions

he served as president of Sigma Delta Chi professional journalism fraternity and was elected to Phi Eta Sigma national honor society. He is a member of the Public Relations Society of America and is active in the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce. Ralph and his wife Terri have an eighteen-month-old son, Zachery. In our new Arkansas president we are fortunate. He will go far in the movement, and much will be heard of and from him in the future. In fact, all of the officers and board members are a credit to the movement. They are vigorous and enthusiastic.

First vice-president, Ordis Higgs, of Little Rock is a vending stand specialist with Arkansas Services for the Blind. Ordis and his wife Elberta have two grown sons and are active in the Church of Christ.

Charles Ledbetter of Hot Springs was elected second vice-president. Employed by Hot Springs Abilities Unlimited Corporation, Charles is president of the Hot Springs chapter. Charles and Peggy have two young sons, Russell and Paul.

Bruce Higgs, a freshman majoring in public speaking at the State College of Arkansas in Conway was elected secretary.

Treasurer is Mrs. Richard (Gladys) Nelsen, a veteran member of the National Federation of the Blind. As many of you know, Mrs. Nelsen is the widow of Dick Nelsen, who led the Federation in Arkansas for so many years. In addition to her Federation activities, Mrs. Nelsen is active in the Methodist Church, is a world member and state president of the WCTU, and works with the Halfway House for Homeless Boys.

Johnny Weaver of Hot Springs was elected to the first board position. Johnny holds an FCC Radio Telephone Operator's First Class Engineer's License and is employed as a radio technician. Walter Harris, a vending stand operator at Arkansas A. M. and N. College in Pine Bluff was elected to the second board position. Board member number three is Alpha Ennis. Alpha is employed as a relief vending stand operator and also works part time in the sewing room of the Little Rock Lighthouse for the Blind. The final board member is Melvin Morrison. Melvin is president of the Little Rock chapter and operates a vending stand in the Commercial National Bank Building. Now that you've met the officers and board members, I know you'll agree with me, that the NFB of Arkansas is an affiliate we can be proud to welcome and one we can expect will make big contributions to the Federation.

After the meeting was over the organizing team went to Frankie's Cafeteria, where we were treated to real "soul food"--cornbread, turnip greens, okra, eggplant, pork chops, roast beef, pecan pie, and a host of other things. Unfortunately Frankie's is going out of business, and will already be gone by the time you read this. On Sunday morning we headed home, most of us to Des Moines; but our adventures were not yet over. When we landed at the St. Louis airport, all of the buildings had been evacuated because of a bomb scare--all of which didn't help President Jernigan's fear of flying. Anyway, we got home without further incident and with the satisfaction of knowing that the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas is on the way up.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### WHY AN NFB

All members of the National Federation of the Blind can be justly proud of the achievements of their organization and their leaders and the culmination of the efforts of us all in 1971. The year's end brought bright promise for increased employment opportunities for the blind in teaching, computer programming, broadcasting, and social work. In each of these fields the organized blind through their own instrumentality--the National Federation of the Blind--went to the barricades and successfully breached the wall of discrimination. In the *Fishbeck, Fucinari, Weckerly, Schmitt, and Keener* cases, from municipality to the Federal Communications Commission, the NFB successfully fought for the right of the blind to engage in that perfectly normal activity--the right to work.

In November of 1971 Glenn Fishbeck wrote to NFB President Jernigan: "Six months have elapsed since I began working for the City of Minneapolis as a computer programmer and I am happy to relay to you the news that I have satisfactorily passed my probationary period and am now considered a permanent employee.

"I wish, again, to express my appreciation to you and the NFB for your advice and support at a time when 'one standing alone' was not enough. The value of a strong national organization was surely demonstrated in my case where 'NO OPPORTUNITY' was changed to 'EQUAL OPPORTUNITY.'

"Keep up the good work, and I hope each member of the NFB will do likewise

so that the NFB may continue to grow toward its goals of equality and opportunity for the entire blind community."

When active NFB member Loren Schmitt was refused the opportunity to take the examinations for social worker the NFB took Cook County, Illinois, to court. The STIPULATION issued by the Circuit Court in December tells the story.

"WHEREAS, LOREN OTIS SCHMITT, Petitioner, a blind person, has brought the within action for a Writ of Mandamus to compel the Respondent, CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, to permit him to take a written examination for the job of Caseworker I in the Cook County Department of Public Aid; and

"WHEREAS, The Respondent, CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION, has resisted said action on the grounds that Plaintiff's physical handicap would prevent him from performing the duties required of said position; and

"WHEREAS, The Respondent has now agreed to permit plaintiff to take said written examination to determine whether he is qualified for said position; and

"WHEREAS, the parties have agreed to settle this litigation amicably and to dismiss the suit;

"NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS STIPULATED BY AND BETWEEN THE PARTIES as follows:

"1. Petitioner, LOREN OTIS SCHMITT, shall be permitted to take the written examination for the job classified

as 'Caseworker I', at a time and place to be designated by the Respondent; Respondent agrees that if Petitioner shall have duly passed said written examination, he shall be placed upon the certified eligible list maintained by the Civil Service Commission for said job, and given employment therein at the earliest practicable opportunity...."

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Loren Schmitt took the tests, and received an order to report for work in early December, 1971. Loren is going to work, but not for Cook County. In January, 1972 he went to work for the Idaho Commission for the Blind. One state's loss is another's gain.

Having negotiated all the problems associated with getting a job, the blind in all kinds of employment discover that there is one more hazard--the probationary period. Reports from supervising personnel sometimes take a sudden negative tone when the time for permanent status approaches. This is especially true for teachers since tenure means a higher salary and fringe benefits. School boards keep many young teachers for the probationary period and then let them go. Blind teachers are especially vulnerable except in states where the organized blind are active. However, the National Federation of the Blind has itself carried the burden for two teachers in Michigan--Evelyn Weckerly and Pauline Fucinari.

In April of 1971, by unanimous decision of the Court of Appeals, we won the *Fucinari* case and Pauline returned to teaching. However, the Board of Education in her district is not convinced

and continues to harrass her. They have denied her permanent certification in order to keep her from teaching. The NFB initiated the court action on her behalf in 1969. Now the Dearborn Federation of Teachers is helping to carry the burden for this round.

*Weckerly v Mona Shores Board of Education* has come to be a by-word in the NFB and a classic case; it is a battle begun by the NFB in 1968. It has been to date successfully fought through the Michigan Supreme Court. That court issued an order after which, in the words of Carl Schier our attorney, the "Court of Appeals reversed itself [on November 23, 1971], reversed the trial court in Ingham county, and re-instated the order of the Tenure Commission, which means that Evelyn is now a tenure teacher with the Mona Shores Board of Education and is entitled to all back salary" which should amount to more than \$20,000. As President Jernigan recently wrote: "As you might imagine, Evelyn is overjoyed. A measure of her character and devotion to the movement is indicated by her action upon hearing the good news. She called me immediately to say that, if and when she receives her back pay, the NFB will receive a generous donation. This is not, of course, something she is obligated to do. Rather it is something she wants to do—an expression of devotion to the movement and appreciation of its worthwhileness.

"This, indeed, is a victory and a triumph of justice."

The case of Mary Jane Keener and the denial of her right to take the examination for First Class Radio License is one of our more improtant victories because it resulted in a change of ruling by

a federal commission which will affect the employment possibilities of all blind persons interested in this broad field. In the case against the Federal Communications Commission the NFB was assisted by Harold Sarner, a promising young attorney from St. Louis, who did yeoman work and made extremely valuable contributions to our victory. But let Miss Keener tell it:

FCC ISSUES NEW RULING  
by  
Mary Jane Keener

In mid September, the Federal Communications Commission issued a ruling on Docket No. 19182 concerning the issuance of commercial radiotelephone operator's licenses to blind persons. In this notice the Commission announced that blind persons could now apply for all classes of radiotelephone operator's licenses and receive a license if found qualified by examination. The notice said that there were thirty letters written to the commission commenting on the original docket No. 19182 "Notice of Proposed Rule Making and Inquiry" which appeared in the August, 1971 *Braille Monitor*. All comments (mostly due to NFB efforts) were in favor of the issuance of licenses to blind persons. During the time the FCC was acting upon these comments they were also receiving pressure from the Federal Court as discussed in the August issue of *The Monitor*.

Effective October 26, blind persons could apply for an appointment at a district FCC office to take license examinations. Such appointments are to be made at least two weeks in advance. The examination is read to the blind

applicant by an FCC employee.

On November 16, 1971, I took the First Class Commercial Radiotelephone License examination and passed it. I think some comments are in order here to prepare other blind applicants for this examination. Before the examination I was required to sign a statement saying in effect that I was requesting an oral examination in lieu of the written examination, due to blindness. The Third Class Radiotelephone exam (Elements 1 and 2) have always been available to blind persons and deal with basic operation, rules and regulations. The Second Class examination (Element 3) and the First Class examination (Element 4) were somewhat of a surprise! I had become very familiar with any circuit diagrams which might appear in the exam because I knew Elements 3 and 4 would contain some, and I would have to help my reader describe them to me. However, I found that the exams contained no circuit diagrams, but that a number of the questions dealt with electrical mathematics problems. It appears that the FCC feel that they are not qualified to describe diagrams to blind persons. I found that it is necessary to know your electronics formulas well and to have a slide rule and abacus handy.

The following restrictive endorsements appeared on my Third Class Operator's Permit:

"This permit is not valid for the operation of any station licensed by the Federal Communications Commission which is required, directly or indirectly, by any treaty, statute or rule or regulation pursuant to statute to be provided for safety purposes."

"This license is not valid for the operation of any station licensed by the Commission unless the station has been adapted for operation by a blind person and the equipment to be used in such station for that purpose is capable of providing for operation in compliance with the Commission's Rules."

The first endorsement above (pertaining to safety purposes) is not on the Second or First Class licenses. However, the second endorsement above (pertaining to adaptation of equipment) is on all commercial radiotelephone licenses issued to blind persons.

Once again, NFB efforts have prevailed. I hope that those people desiring any class of radiotelephone operator's license will make application to the FCC and obtain such licenses. I now hold a valid First Class Commercial Radiotelephone Operator's license thanks to the efforts of the organized blind. This proves again what our working together for a common cause can accomplish!

I'm now looking for employment which is a great challenge, made difficult due to major layoff of present personnel. However, I'm confident that I will find my place in broadcasting, professional recording, or some related field.

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In the cases of Fishbeck, Schmitt, Fucinari, Weckerly, and Keener, we see the emerging pattern. During the past months in five separate cases, the NFB has gone to the barricades and been successful. Let those who ask, "What can the organized blind movement do for me?" consider carefully the results. In some

instances the preparation and the spadework are far removed from the day of final victory--as, for instance, when attempts are being made to pass the Model White Cane Law in a state. It is easy to say, "What good is all of this going to do?"

Then, along comes a *Loren Schmitt* or a *Weeklyer* case, and the answer is easy to read. Before we can have freedom and equality, we must inform ourselves. We must think freedom, and act it. We must think equality. It must become a part of our daily patterns of living and action. Then second class citizenship becomes unthinkable and impossible.

Such is the National Federation of the Blind today. Such are the individual blind men and women who make up the movement. Our feet are on the road, and our hearts and minds are dedicated to the cause. Can anyone doubt what the final outcome will be? Let reactionary agencies live in the past and seek their accreditation from NAC. Let the doubting counselors and agency psychiatrists tell us it cannot be done and why, indeed, we don't really have a movement at all. Let large segments of the public practice discrimination against us. And even let some of our fellow blind show doubt and despair.

The record is clear, and the progress is unmistakable. We have combined for concerted action to establish a new day for the blind, and the goal is in sight. We shall prevail.

\* \* \* \* \*

ACB AND FCC-OR  
COMMENTS ON THE COWBIRD  
by  
Lawrence Marcelino

The cowbird is the most hated of them all. According to WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY (College Edition, 1964) "cowbirds often lay eggs in other birds' nests."

As every good Federationist knows, we have been engaged in quite a battle to get the FCC to change its rules to permit blind persons to take the test for Radio First Class operator licenses. The NFB put its money where its mouth was. In the spring of 1970, Mary Jane Keener was denied the right to take the test for the First Class License. She came to the NFB for help.

It is a matter of record that NFB attorneys wrote letters and conducted verbal negotiations with FCC officials. All appeal and administrative remedies were exhausted. The NFB then went into the Federal courts to compel the FCC to let Miss Keener take the test. Pretrial hearings were held, at which NFB witnesses and attorneys were present. The judge gave every indication of ruling against the FCC.

Before these pretrial hearings (that is, in the spring of 1971), the FCC took alarm and issued a notice of a possible change of rules. It said that it would be happy to have statements from all interested persons. It was, of course, not just coincidence that this FCC decision came after several months of negotiation with and pressure from the NFB.

It would also seem to be more than mere coincidence that the FCC caved in

and decided to let blind persons apply for First Class Licenses just a few days before the judge's decision in the *Keener* case would have been forthcoming. The FCC then asked that the case be dismissed on the grounds of mootness. This was done without objection from the NFB since the goal had been achieved.

Federationists also know that Mary Jane Keener went on to take the test and receive the First Class License. She believes that the license will be a key factor in helping her secure employment, and she knows that the efforts of the NFB were instrumental in her victory. In other words, it would seem that a happy ending could be written to the story.

Now, along comes the American Council of the Blind in its publication, *The Braille Forum*, November, 1971 issue, and claims credit for the victory. In an article entitled "FCC Takes a New Look at Blind Radio Operators," the following statements appear: "Travis Harris reports that 'through the efforts of members of the American Council of the Blind and others, First and Second Class radio operator's licenses may be granted to the blind. FCC regulations heretofore have precluded the blind from becoming engineers with First Class Licenses, which, of course, greatly limited opportunities for blind radio operator technicians.

" 'This matter has been under consideration by the FCC for the last several months, . . . It was discussed on the ACB Service Net and a number of us blind people wrote to the FCC requesting that the rules be revised so that blind people may take the examination for A and B Class Licenses. We can all be proud that ACB along with others has been able to

get FCC to change its regulations so that blind people can qualify for greater opportunities in the field of broadcasting.' "

What a statement! The American Council of the Blind was not involved in all the months of negotiation; it did not put one single penny into the court case; it did not take part in pretrial or post-trial discussions—a few of its members wrote letters. Yet, the ACB "and others" won the victory. Presumably the NFB might fall into the category of "others."

A person not conversant with all the facts might well conclude from reading the *Forum* that the ACB had carried the ball and done the principal work. The facts speak for themselves. The tactics are what we have come to expect. They are not likely to be successful.

The cowbird is the most hated of them all. According to Webster's Dictionary "cowbirds often lay eggs in other birds' nests."

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#### CONNECTICUT REORGANIZES by Kenneth Jernigan

Saturday, December 5, was a great day for the blind of Connecticut. On that date the National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut completely reorganized, and what an organization it is going to be! This group gives promise of becoming one of our best, most active, and strongest affiliates.

As most Federationists know, the National Office of the Federation and the

blind of Connecticut have been carrying on a rather intensive organizing campaign in that state during the past few months. In October NFB Secretary Lawrence Marcelino headed a team which spent over a week in the state. This effort culminated in a convention on October 30—a convention characterized by the attempt of an employee of the Connecticut agency to take control of the organization (at which, incidentally, he failed completely). It was decided at that time to hold the meeting for the reorganization of the affiliate on Saturday, December 4. This was done, and I had the pleasure of attending and chairing the proceedings.

I arrived late Friday afternoon, December 3, and was met by Franklin and Gertrude VanVliet at the Hartford airport. We joined a number of the leading blind persons of the area for dinner and made our plans for the next day.

Unfortunately we were denied the help of Gil Haddon, whom many of you met and came to like so well at Houston. After a mild heart attack and pursuant to doctor's orders, Gil sent me a letter of resignation as state president. He had worked extremely hard to bring about the reorganization and strengthening of the affiliate, and it was cause for real regret that he could not be present.

On Saturday morning we met at the Oak Hill School for the Blind, where delegates gathered from throughout the state. It was an alert, enthusiastic group—one with a clear determination that the National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut should be a truly independent organization, not dominated by the agencies and not limited to coffee and cake and to social activities. I began by

outlining the steps which had led up to the meeting and followed this with a report on Federation activities throughout the country, attempting to place in perspective the day's proceedings.

Then questions and comments came from the floor. It was at this stage that we had a bit of excitement. Everyone had wondered, of course, if the same agency official who had tried to take control of the October meeting would come for a second attempt. He didn't, but we had something very nearly as good.

A man in the back of the room launched an attack on the October organizing effort. When I tried to reason with him, he undertook to shout me down—a moderately hard task since my vocal cords are in good condition, and I had the advantage of having the microphone. I told him he would get equal time but that he would have to listen as well as talk. He got his equal time, but this didn't seem to be what he wanted since he didn't stay for the afternoon session.

The rest of the meeting was not nearly so boisterous but much more productive. It is always exciting to see a new or reorganized affiliate come into being, and Connecticut was certainly no exception. As the afternoon advanced, we adopted a constitution, elected officers, and made plans for the coming year.

The new president of the National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut is Reverend Howard E. May, Jr., RFD 1, West Willington, Connecticut 06279. Reverend May has been pastor of the Federated Church of Willington for fourteen years and blind for the past ten. He holds degrees from the University of

Toledo and Colgate. He is married and has four children, three of them adopted. Reverend May is a member of the Board of Managers of the Connecticut Baptist Convention and a founding member of the Open Door Society of Connecticut, which is an interracial adoption society. Besides all of these things, Reverend May is enthusiastic, personable, and a forceful speaker. He will make an excellent state leader.

The rest of the Board is also of high caliber. The first vice-president is Ben Snow of Hartford. Mr. Snow holds an AA and BA from the University of Bridgeport and an MA in Education and in Special Vocational Rehabilitation from New York University. He is active in Scouting, serving as an assistant district commissioner and editing a district newsletter.

The second vice-president is Mrs. Shirley Lebowitz of West Hartford, who is one of the most active members of the Federation in the state. Blind for the past ten years, Mrs. Lebowitz is a registered nurse. She has taught communicable disease and precaution technique. She is married and has two daughters. In addition to her Federation activities she runs a medical transcribing service in her home. She is a member of the Order of the Golden Chain of Beth Israel Synagogue and is active in community affairs. Mrs. Lebowitz was one of the principal organizers and planners of the December 4 meeting, and I think she will make great contributions to the movement in the years ahead-both at the state and national levels.

The secretary is Mrs. Dorothy N. Campbell of Newtown. Mrs. Campbell is

chaplain of her local Grange and is a long time member of the Eastern Star, having held office in that organization. She has been a teacher and the operator of a store. She is currently the Assistant to the Medical Librarian at the Fairfield Hills Hospital in Fairfield, Connecticut. She holds a degree from Columbia University. *Monitor* readers will remember her letter to Mr. Barnett in the December issue concerning the "Step by Step Guide" published by the American Foundation for the Blind. She is a thoroughly dedicated Federationist.

The treasurer is Mrs. Theresa Calusine of Bloomfield. Sighted herself, she has a blind daughter and an abiding interest in the movement. She is a bonded employee of the J. M. Ney Company.

In addition to the officers four Board members were elected: H. Kevin Harkins of Danbury, John Wellman of Hamden, Francis Meunier of Berlin, and Sonia Rotko of Danbury. Mr. Harkins is a junior at Wooster School, a private prep school, and he does volunteer work in drug abuse. John Wellman is a promising young lawyer, holding an LLB from Drake University and an LLM from Yale. He works for the Bridgeport Legal Services, an agency funded by OEO. Again, we should hear a great deal from John Wellman in the years ahead. Francis Meunier is a teacher of history at the St. James Boys' School. He holds a BA from Bard College at Annandale on the Hudson, New York, and an MA from Ohio University in Athens. Sonia Rotko works at the Southbury Training School and has a degree from West Connecticut State College.

As you will see, this is quite a Board,

and as I have already said, the Connecticut affiliate is quite an organization. After the meeting I got together with the Board for planning purposes, and then the VanVliets and I went off to eat lobster and clams. The next morning Franklin and Gertrude drove me to New York City for the NAC Board meeting.

I left Connecticut feeling much encouraged about the future of the Federation in that state. The organization is solidly based and is sure to make progress.

\* \* \* \* \*

“JUDGE NOT,  
THAT YE BE  
NOT JUDGED”

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO  
Greeley, Colorado 80631  
*College of Education*  
Department of Special Education

November 10, 1971

Mr. Robert Acosta, President  
Teachers' Division  
National Federation of the Blind  
9927 DeSoto Avenue, Apartment 26  
Chatsworth, California 91311

Dear Mr. Acosta:

Just yesterday, I was given a copy of your braille edition of the “News Letter” for October. The purpose of giving me a copy was to interest me in joining the Teachers’ Division since I am a teacher educator and involved with visually handicapped children and their future teachers. On the basis of the “News Letter,” I am extremely unimpressed and even

negatively impressed relative to the group over whom you serve as president. My following comments will elaborate on my feelings.

First of all, the general lay-out of the “publication” is anything but professional. I would rank it as even worse than amateur in quality. If you knew in advance the size of Braille pages, why did you not compose the master copy to fit the same size page? If you still insisted upon doing it your way, why did you not cut off the right portion of the Braille page instead of just folding it over?

The next general criticism is that you do not know Braille Code. The word “teacher” is not written as shown in your publication; instead, it should be t(ea)(ch)(er). (Naturally, those letters shown within parentheses represent Braille contractions.) A list of similar errors follows:

Paragraphs begin in the third cell and not in the sixth.

“first” should be f(st)

The word “in” in contracted form should not follow the opening parenthesis.

“these” is made with dots 4-5(the).

“in the” is not written without a space between.

*Braille Monitor* should have italics marks to show it is the name of a publication.

“although” should be al(th).

*N.E.A. Journal* should also have italics.

ipsl 7/8 (not as you did it).

“upon” should be dots 4-5u.

“ten-dollar” should have the hyphen.

“NFB” should have the double capital dot.

“to you” should have the (to) contraction.

“through” should be dot 5(th).

“in a” should have a space between.

"instrumental in" is a better construction for "instrumental for."

"Go, man, go!" should have two commas, not just one.

Since I do not have a copy of the ink-print issue, my only comment might be that I hope its quality is better than the braille edition. If it is better, then by inference I might conclude that you think normally seeing persons are deserving of better quality in their reading matter. If the ink-print edition is also poor in quality, you will fail to impress not only me as a braille reader but many normally seeing teachers who maintain high standards in both braille and ink-print communication skills.

If I were an employer seeking a teacher, I would not contact the Teachers Division of NFB for prospects.

I realize that not all members of the Teachers Division will be teachers of visually handicapped children but of normally seeing students. However, the "New Letter" speaks for both sets of teachers. Teachers of visually handicapped students should object noisily and profusely about your mediocrity. By the same token, one might wonder just how high are the professional standards of visually handicapped teachers who hope to teacher the normally seeing school population. Before the teacher of either category joins, he or she should ask if the "News Letter" is the instrument to represent him in trying to find a job. Such a teacher might be waiting a very long time with only negative replies from prospective employers who are seeking quality teachers for their school systems.

In this area of accountability, employers and funding agencies are extremely interested in behavioral objectives and their measurement or evaluation as seen in performance. Employers and funding agencies are no longer interested solely in high-sounding phrases while teachers continue to rock in their chairs of lethargy. Get out of your rockers and perform so that we can put evaluation not only where your mouth is but where your professionalism is. The "News Letter", even with its three-fold purpose, has failed the test of performance. Instead of "Go, man, go," why not adopt "Mediocrity is not good enough!"

Sincerely yours,

Grace D. Napier, Ed.D.  
Assoc. Prof. of Special Education  
Dept. of Communication Disorders  
School of Special Educ. and Rehab.  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

GDN/mah

P. S. If members of the Teachers Division are not hired because of the negative impression made by your "News Letter," do not yell "It's discrimination against the blind." Employers have the responsibility to discriminate mediocrity from excellence.

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NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND  
ROBERT ACOSTA, PRESIDENT  
NFB TEACHERS DIVISION

9927 DeSoto Avenue, Apt. 26  
Chatsworth, California 91311  
November 29, 1971

Dr. Grace D. Napier  
School of Special Education & Rehabilitation  
University of Northern Colorado  
Greeley, Colorado 80631

Dear Dr. Napier:

Thank you for your letter of November 10, 1971, in which you presented us with a thorough analysis of the *News Letter* of the Teachers Division of the National Federation of the Blind.

Although your statements regarding the brailling of the *News Letter* were valid, I believe that you are nitpicking. Your criticisms of our efforts were tantamount to my criticizing your use of elite instead of Pica type. None of these minor errors interfere with the readability of the *News Letter*. You must realize that the readers of the *News Letter* read at different levels of braille. I frankly do not see the difference in writing the word "first" out as opposed to using the braille contraction "fst." In other words, I believe that you spent so much time ascertaining the braille errors in our letter that you missed the whole intent of what the Teachers Division is trying to accomplish.

The braille *News Letter* was thermoformed and mailed by a volunteer staff of blind high school students. By the time we learned that they had used the wrong size of paper, the brailling had already been completed. I did not realize that the fact that a portion of the paper was folded would prove to be such a problem to anyone. In fact, you are the first and only person to make such a complaint.

After your meticulous listing of our minor errors, you then falsely infer that I believe

that "normally seeing persons are deserving of better quality in their reading matter" than are braille readers. You could not be more incorrect in your assumption. It is because of my high regard for braille readers, since I am one, myself, that this letter was published as quickly as possible. As a braille reader I would rather receive an article in Braille with a few errors at the same time as the print issue, than wait six months for it to be done by a *professional* braillist. For example, the American Printing House for the Blind would take at least this amount of time to produce a similar letter in braille.

In other words, you have chosen to criticize the work of a group of volunteers, not because you found our goals to be improper, but because we did not use the most up-to-date braille and because we did not fold or cut the paper to your satisfaction. Yet, at the same time, you tell us to get out of our rocking chairs of lethargy, and then you further state, "Perform so that we can put evaluation not only where your mouth is, but where your professionalism is".

I think you had better wake up and realize that we all share the same major problem in that we are blind. I would urge you to get out of your own rocking chair of lethargy and begin to really do something for the blind teachers of Colorado. For example, what legislation have you sponsored on behalf of blind teachers in your state? How many articles have you written for the *Braille Monitor* in order to help blind teachers upgrade themselves? So I would say to you, Dr. Napier, that rather than criticizing the efforts of volunteers who, whether you appreciate it or not, are working on your behalf, you

should get involved in the organized blind movement by joining the Colorado affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind.

This publication of ours does not claim to be a magazine or a newspaper, but a report on what the blind teachers of this nation are doing to better themselves. Because I did not use a double dot six before NFB you have labeled the entire organization mediocre. Let us look at the contributions made by blind teachers working within the National Federation of the Blind for the past thirty years. First of all, there are blind educators teaching at every level of education from pre-school through college. Secondly, with regard to legislation, in my state the Federation saw to it that all visual acuity clauses were stricken from the state education code so that blind teachers could obtain credentials. Because of the work of the National Federation of the Blind there are approximately one hundred and five blind teachers employed in California, some of whom are teaching blind youngsters. You dare to label us mediocre!

In the final analysis I, too, could draw many inferences from your letter-the most glaring of which, Dr. Napier, is that you will not admit to the fact that you are blind. I can infer this not only from your remarks to me, but from your speech before the Teachers Division of the NFB in Houston this past summer when you continually used the phrase "visually-handicapped" which would imply to me that you feel the blind do not exist.

By the way, the *News Letter* of the Teachers Division does not speak for blind teachers, but is blind teachers speaking for

themselves. For your further enlightenment I am including an ink-print copy of our October '71 *News Letter* and I would ask you to truly read it without looking for flaws in the copy.

Get involved, Dr. Napier. Get involved!

Sincerely,

Robert Acosta, President

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December 22, 1971

Dr. Grace D. Napier, Ed.D.  
Associate Professor of Special Education  
Department of Communication Disorders  
School of Special Education  
and Rehabilitation  
University of Northern Colorado  
Greeley, Colorado 80631

Dear Dr. Napier:

I have read with considerable interest your letter dated November 10, 1971, to Mr. Robert Acosta, President of the Teachers Division of the National Federation of the Blind. Blind yourself, you lecture Mr. Acosta and the NFB rather waspishly on the subjects of mediocrity and lack of performance. You catalogue in detail small "picky" Braille errors in the *Newsletter* of the Teachers Division. You then say: "Get out of your rockers and perform so that we can put evaluation not only where your mouth is but where your professionalism is."

Finally, you tell us with sweet good temper: "Instead of 'Go, man, go,' why not adopt 'Mediocrity is not good enough!'"

Indeed, Dr. Napier, mediocrity is not good enough. Are you willing to be judged by the standards you have set for others? The very letter which contains your smug and condescending criticisms is filled with errors. You tell us that performance counts, and you tell us that we should not cry "discrimination" if we are judged by what we do. Very well! Consider your own performance.

In the second sentence of your fourth paragraph you misspell the word "should." It is not properly written "shoud." In most civilized parts of the English speaking world the word contains an "l." In the second sentence of your eighth paragraph another error appears. Instead of "Newsletter" you have written "New Letter."

The fourth sentence of your eighth paragraph reads: "By the same token, one might wonder just how high are the professional standards of visually handicapped teachers who hope to teacher the normally seeing school population." How can one "teacher" a normally seeing child? When one considers the content of your sentence, the error takes on a tinge of irony.

If you tell me that you did not do your own typing and, therefore, that you are not responsible, I answer to you that it is written: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? . . .

first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." Matthew 7:1-5

There are, of course, other errors in your letter (layout and threefold, for instance, are not hyphenated), but I think I have said enough to make the point. I would not have written you as I have if I had felt that you were really concerned about the "picky" errors you mentioned. Rather, I think you were trying to be snide and smug and that you were, in reality, trying to justify to yourself your guilt feelings for not getting into the movement and trying to work with the rest of us. As a result of the efforts of the organized blind movement you personally have benefited, whether you admit it or not. I would ask you now to do some soul-searching and see whether you should not become an active part of the movement. Probably my letter will anger you. This does not really matter if it serves the purpose of causing you to examine your conscience.

As you yourself have said, mediocrity will not do-in conscience, rationalization, contribution to one's fellow man, self-honesty, and a number of other things. Therefore, I invite you: Go, man, go!

Very truly yours,

Kenneth Jernigan, President  
National Federation of the Blind

P. S. I hope you will reread (assuming you have read it in the first place) the last part of the 1971 NFB banquet speech. It speaks directly to you. K. J.

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COPIED FROM THE BACK  
OF A CHRISTMAS LETTER

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

I appreciate your letter in response to my letter to Mr. Acosta. Because of limited university budgets, we are often burdened--rather than assisted--by parttime typists who are earning money to pay their own educational expenses as students. I agree with you that her letter is abominable!

I remember with pleasure my visit with you and your good wife just a year ago.

I trust that 1972 will contain generous amounts of personal health and satisfaction and great success for the Commission and NFB activities.

Cordially yours,

Grace D. Napier

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE  
WITH THE  
LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS  
Washington, D. C. 20540

November 12, 1971

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

I have given considerable thought to the reply to your letter of October 18 concerning braille proofreaders. There was certainly no deception in my letter of October 12, replying to your earlier letters

on this subject. I attempted to state the facts of the Library's program to obtain acceptable quality in hand-transcribed, volunteer-produced braille. It is difficult, of course, to respond to your complaints since they are neither simple nor precise, and you combine several issues in your letters, such as the comments about the Library's employment of the blind in your letter of September 16 dealing otherwise with braille proofreaders. My response of October 12 attempted to answer these complaints.

The critical issue in the present complaint appears to be the assertion on your part that no hand-transcribed, volunteer-produced braille should be released without proofreading by a qualified blind proofreader who is paid for this work. You seem to feel that the Library of Congress must establish and enforce such a program. It is certainly not within the power of the Library of Congress to do so, nor is it possible for any other agency of the Federal or State governments, so far as I know. Short of this, however, you ask that we use the "influence and prestige" of the Library to advance this cause, or at least that we do not thwart this cause by recognizing the requests of sighted persons to learn proofreading.

The Library of Congress has in the past and will continue to support the various programs under which volunteer groups transcribe material into Braille for the use of the blind. Our support is largely directed toward coordinating the work of such groups and providing training for braille transcribers leading to a certificate of proficiency. Since blind people need similar training in the technical structure of braille for the purpose of proofreading

either press or hand-transcribed braille, the Library also provides training for them leading to a certificate of proficiency. (Some 210 blind persons are currently certified under this program.)

The Library cannot require the employment of proofreaders by volunteer groups, nor can we even require proofreading of any kind. We have endeavored to bring together the two groups-transcribers and proofreaders--by means of a directory that is issued periodically. This must be the limit of our responsibility.

When sighted transcribers request additional instruction so as to proofread their own work, we feel that the Library must meet this request. To refuse would not be of benefit to the blind: it is doubtful that volunteer groups making such requests would hire certified proofreaders as the result of our refusal. They would release the braille material without proofreading. It is our feeling, therefore, that the program you are espousing would result in a significant reduction in the quality of braille reading material for the blind clientele the Library and your organization are trying to serve. We shall, of course, continue to urge volunteer groups to use the services of certified blind proofreaders.

In our correspondence on this topic you have included several letters complaining about failures of the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to respond promptly and effectively to correspondence from those interested in becoming proofreaders, as well as from proofreaders who do not receive enough work from us. It is certainly our intention to assure the best possible management of

the program as we see it, and these specific matters will be investigated.

With regard to employment of certified proofreaders by the Library in its own program of obtaining hand-transcribed, volunteer-produced braille, I want to repeat again--so there can be no misunderstanding on anyone's part--that we employ in this work only certified (and blind) proofreaders based upon their acceptable performance and with due regard to sharing this work equitably.

Two other matters need clarification for the record. Mrs. Dorf's letter of September 3 to Mrs. Grannis did not say that "not enough blind proofreaders can be found to do the work" as you state in your letter of September 16. She said, "in some cities where brailists are most active, there is a scarcity of proofreaders." (See the enclosure on this point.) In further response to the comment in your letter of September 16 about the Division's staff, please note that there are nineteen staff members who are blind, with salaries ranging from \$5,400 to \$13,500 a year. Most of these blind staff members hold positions of responsibility and the competence of all is certainly recognized.

Sincerely yours,

L. Quincy Mumford  
Librarian of Congress

Enclosure

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BRAILLE PROOFREADING COURSES

For certification--open only to blind

persons, the course consists of twelve to fourteen lessons depending on braille knowledge of individuals when they start. Most persons take about a year to complete the course. There are now about two hundred ten certified proofreaders.

For volunteers-open only to certified braille transcribers with at least one year of actual experience. Four lessons. Most volunteers complete the course of four lessons in two to three months. Only forty-eight volunteers have completed the course.

*Examples of "Shortages" of Proofreaders*

Arizona--2 braille transcribing groups; only 1 certified proofreader

Connecticut--7 transcribing groups; only 1 certified proofreader

Missouri--7 transcribing groups; only 1 certified proofreader

Montana--1 transcribing group; no certified proofreaders

Michigan--12 transcribing groups; 3 proofreaders

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THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS  
Washington, D. C. 20540

November 23, 1971

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

The following information is forwarded in response to the three problem areas as described by Mr. James B. Carlock in his letter to you dated

October 29, 1971.

1. *Talking Book Program.*

This program is far from being poorly planned. It has followed a careful progression of steps directed toward the objective of providing the best possible reading machines and materials. The following is a brief chronology:

1934--First talking book machines and records at 33-1/3 rpm

1958--First talking book machines at 16-2/3 rpm

1962--First talking book records at 16-2/3 rpm

1965--First talking book machines at 8-1/3 rpm

1968--First talking book records at 8-1/3 rpm

1968--First transistorized talking book machines

1969--First tape cassettes and cassette recorders

1971--First two-speed, rechargeable battery pack cassette players

Each step has meant improvement in the machines, in lower cost of the recordings, and in greater convenience for the user. Far from casting doubt "on the management ability and soundness of the financial practices," these changes have saved many thousands of dollars. As specific examples: (1) in fiscal year 1961 a two-speed, talking book machine with vacuum tube circuits cost about \$32 each,

whereas in fiscal year 1970 a three-speed transistorized machine with greatly improved controls and sound quality cost only \$30 each; (2) in fiscal year 1961 the average recorded book required 16 records at 33-1/3 rpm and cost \$10.40, whereas in fiscal year 1970 the average book required only eight 16-2/3 rpm records and cost only \$4.00 (not even considering the lower cost for mailing and storage and the added convenience for the user); (3) for short-run magazines the comparison is 65 cents each for 12 inch, 33-1/3 rpm records in 1961 with 50 minutes of playing time and 49 cents each for 10 inch, 8-1/3 rpm records in 1970 with three hours of playing time. Costs of the cassette program are higher, but the convenience of this form of recording justifies the cost. Even here, the Division is working to improve the program and to reduce costs.

## *2. Communications.*

A review of our files reveals that more than 40 technical circulars, memorandums, and announcements were sent during 1970 to agencies involved in the talking book program, and more than 40 have already been sent this year. Information is distributed as quickly as it becomes available, and agencies are regularly requested to indicate their needs, problems, and recommendations. Agencies are advised of plans, of progress, and of the actual beginning of programs.

## *3. State-Federal Relations.*

In administering the program, service to eligible individuals is the prime consideration. The Library of Congress discourages routines and procedures which tend to cause delays or inconvenience to present or prospective blind or other

physically handicapped readers. When a reader, a library, or cooperating agency in a State turns to us with a complaint, we try to have it resolved within the State, offering suggestions and recommendations when appropriate. At the same time, we recognize the fact that this program is dependent upon the support of State agencies and the right of the States to organize this support in the way they feel is best. When problems develop at the State level, of course, we feel we must make some efforts to resolve them, and these efforts may sometimes be construed as interference. We, however, are very aware of the delicacy of this and do not attempt in any way to dictate to a State agency. The Library of Congress does have the final responsibility under the law for administering the program and for selecting the agencies to provide the service.

As I have written you before, the extent of problems encountered in my review of the program of the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped does not justify the extreme criticisms made by the National Federation of the Blind and its affiliates.

Sincerely yours,

L. Quincy Mumford  
Librarian of Congress

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December 8, 1971

Mr. L. Quincy Mumford  
Librarian of Congress  
Washington, D. C. 20540

Dear Mr. Mumford:

In reading your letters of November 12 and 23, 1971, I am reminded of some lines from T. S. Eliot. He speaks of "A tedious argument of insidious intent to lead you to an overwhelming question." He then goes on to say: "Oh, do not ask 'What is it?' Let us go and make our visit."

It seems to me that we have pretty much arrived at this point in our correspondence and communications. I have brought to your attention a considerable amount and variety of documentation concerning problems with the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped experienced by blind persons and agencies doing work with the blind. Mostly, it seems to me, you have reacted defensively instead of dealing with the substantive issues.

To review, Mr. Hahn (a staff member in Mr. Bray's Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped) agreed to attend the convention of the National Federation of the Blind this summer. He did not do so, and you ultimately determined that his explanations were not satisfactory. Then, you asked for documentation concerning the charge that Mr. Bray and other members of his staff were not operating effectively and were rude and discourteous in their dealings. That documentation was sent to you.

In the meantime it developed that Mr. Bray had made representations to Senator Miller and that those representations were, to say the least, dramatically short-lived. You looked into the matter, and a good deal of correspondence relating to it was exchanged.

With respect to Mr. Hahn, the

problem involving Mr. Bray's representations to Senator Miller, and the documentation I supplied you, you dealt defensively with each point but did not, as I see it, deal with the overall question. Specifically concerning the documentation, your replies seemed unresponsive. With respect to the South Carolina problem you simply say that it has now been corrected. This, of course, I pointed out to you in the original documentation. The matter was presented not as a current issue but to show a pattern involving Mr. Bray's abrasiveness, failure to respond to letters and phone calls, and general rudeness. The same kind of treatment was given to the Oklahoma situation. I pointed out to you that it was part of the pattern of Mr. Bray's conduct, that it had caused a great furor in the state, and that it was only settled when you personally took a hand. You responded by saying that you took a hand in the matter. To which one can only reply, "Yes, of course, that is exactly what I told you." The matter was presented to show you part of the pattern with respect to Utah, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Iowa, and with respect to the proofreading problems the responses were similar.

Therefore we come back to T. S. Eliot's "tedious argument of insidious intent to lead us to an overwhelming question." The question still remains, and it will not go away by being ignored or evaded. Ultimately, if we cannot find administrative solutions, then we will urge that a Congressional investigation be conducted. Whether Congress will respond favorably to such urgings (assuming that we feel this is our last resort) I cannot, of course, know.

Your letter of November 23, 1971,

concludes with this statement: "As I have written you before, the extent of the problems encountered in my review of the program of the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped does not justify the extreme criticisms made by the National Federation of the Blind and its affiliates."

It seems to me that you put the matter in the wrong perspective. The criticism does not just come from the National Federation of the Blind and its affiliates. It comes from agencies doing work with the blind, from individual professionals in the field, from organizations of the blind, and from rank and file blind persons throughout the country. It is widespread and general.

The question now is where we go from here. From the tone of your recent correspondence, I am led to wonder whether you wish me to cease sending you further documentation of problems with Mr. Bray's Division. It seems that the recounting of every such problem is met with a uniformly defensive answer. The organized blind of the nation will continue to seek improvements in their services, and we would hope that problems could be brought to the attention of the Librarian of Congress as they arise. The bringing of a problem does not automatically imply an attack upon the Librarian of Congress. I should appreciate your reaction to these comments.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth Jernigan, President  
National Federation of the Blind

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THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS  
Washington, D. C. 20540

December 17, 1971

Dear Mr. Jernigan:

I have carefully read your letter of December 8, and have given serious consideration to what you have to say. I shall now comment as you requested.

I have carefully reviewed each matter presented by you throughout our correspondence, and have attempted to give you valid facts. I am sorry you view my explanations as defensive. It is not clear to me exactly what you mean by "dealing with substantive issues;" some problems have been used as the basis for discussions looking toward improvement and change.

I cannot accept the "perspective" mentioned in your penultimate paragraph. Only the National Federation of the Blind, its affiliates, and allied individuals have so far attacked the program of the Library's Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. A number of other organizations working with the blind and individuals from various parts of the country have written in support of the program after having read the articles in *The Braille Monitor*. The criticism is far from being "widespread and general."

As I have said before, the Library is always anxious to effect improvements in any of its programs when these benefit the majority of users and when they are feasible with the available resources. We accept suggestions as well as criticisms from interested groups and individuals, but the final decisions may not always

please everyone. Your efforts during the past few months have served the useful purpose of stimulating a review of our programs and procedures.

I agree that our correspondence has reached the point of covering most of the problems identified to date. I shall be glad to review any further problems you wish to identify.

Sincerely yours,

L. Quincy Mumford  
Librarian of Congress

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December 31, 1971

Mr. L. Quincy Mumford  
Librarian of Congress  
Washington, D. C. 20540

Dear Mr. Mumford:

In your letter of December 17 you tell me that you have carefully read my letter of December 8 and given serious consideration to what I have to say. I have now done the same with yours and have found it as unsatisfactory as you apparently did mine. If you do not know what I mean by "dealing with substantive issues," I doubt that I can explain it to you. On the other hand, if you simply do not want to know what I mean by "dealing with substantive issues," I presume we are at the same place. In any case I tell you again that I believe you have reacted defensively and that you have persistently refused to deal with the substantive issues I have presented to you. Be it so.

You say that "Only the National Federation of the Blind, its affiliates, and allied individuals have so far attacked the program of the Library's Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped." In my opinion, any reasonably objective examination of the evidence will show that your statement is simply not in accord with the facts. To say that the heads of the agencies for the blind in Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Arizona are affiliates or allies of the Federation makes the term fairly inclusive. To go on to imply that the librarian in Philadelphia, the librarian in Utah, the head of the Commission in Idaho, and a great number of proofreaders and other blind individuals are complaining simply because they are associated with the NFB begins to tax credulity. In fact, you seem to reason thusly: The National Federation of the Blind is engaged in some sort of conspiratorial activity. Only Federationists criticize the Library. Therefore, everybody who criticizes the Library is a Federationist. Obviously the Library is good, and any criticism can easily be explained by the fact that it was made by the National Federation of the Blind. Never mind who makes the criticism. The very fact of its existence proves that the individual is a Federationist; and this, in turn, proves that the criticism is false. What a way to reason!

In any case we are where we are, and as I told you in my last letter, the issues will not go away or the problems be solved by simply pretending they do not exist. I assume that we are now in the situation of taking our case to our Congressmen and Senators if we wish redress. I am sure that consideration will be given to the next step.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth Jernigan, President  
National Federation of the Blind

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**LIBRARY SERVICES STYMIED  
BY LACK OF FUNDS**

December 13, 1971

Mr. Edward F. Parker  
6125 Valley View  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49009

Dear Mr. Parker:

I have your letter concerning the library problems in Michigan, and I must say that I was shocked to read that no further applications for service will be processed for the foreseeable future. Of course, the national office of the Federation will do all that it can to be of help. In the meantime, I think you are following the right course in alerting public officials and calling on the Library of Congress for assistance.

As problems of this type continue to become evident, one wonders whether some of the library officials will persist in contending that all is well. Ultimately the Library of Congress has the responsibility for seeing that you and other blind persons in Michigan have services available to you. Let me hasten to add that I am not, by this statement, implying that state budget cuts in Michigan are the fault of the Library of Congress officials. I am sure that they regret it. I am, however, suggesting that they have the responsibility for keeping informed about such things and of finding a way to see

that library service to the blind does not break down in any part of the country. It is certainly regrettable that the situation has been permitted to deteriorate to the point that service is actually not available at all to some blind individuals and that there is an indefinite moratorium on the processing of new applications.

Obviously something must be done immediately. In addition to the letters you have written I would suggest that you and the other blind citizens of Michigan contact the mass media as vigorously and as broadly as possible. Surely the public will not tolerate this breakdown of service to the blind if they know of it. Please keep me informed of developments.

Cordially,

Kenneth Jernigan, President  
National Federation of the Blind

P. S. I am sending a copy of your letter and my answer to the state president of the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan. He will, of course, need to be involved in any wide scale action that is taken in the state. In case you do not have his address, it is: Mr. Geer Wilcox, 4200 S. Pennsylvania, Apartment 12, Lansing, Michigan 48910. K. J.

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6125 Valley View  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49009  
November 30, 1971

Mr. Kenneth Jernigan, President  
National Federation of the Blind  
524 Fourth Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Ken:

This is the first opportunity I have had to correspond with you, so please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Edward F. Parker. I am a retired engineer, legally blind. I had been living in Moscow, Idaho, where I am an active member of the Gem State Blind an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind.

In Idaho, I received excellent library services from my regional library, the Utah State Library Commission at Salt Lake City. Recently I have moved to Kalamazoo, Michigan, where I made application to the regional library, Blind and Handicapped Library, Lansing, Michigan. Enclosed please find a copy of a letter from Miss Susan M Haskin, Head Librarian, in which she states that no applications will be processed until she has more assistance and an increase in personnel. Owing to recent state budget cuts this could mean for years or possibly forever.

I am enclosing copies of letters I have sent to several public officials in an attempt to obtain library services for the blind in this area. Do you have any suggestions? Any and all help you or the Federation can give will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your assistance.

Very sincerely yours,

Edward F. Parker

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6125 Valley View  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49009  
November 30, 1971

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Mr. Robert S. Bray, Chief  
Division for the Blind and  
Physically Handicapped  
Library of Congress  
Washington, D. C. 20542

Dear Mr. Bray:

Your assistance is requested in obtaining services from the regional library for the blind and physically handicapped, Lansing, Michigan.

Enclosed you will find a copy of a letter from Miss Susan Haskin, Head Librarian, Blind and Physically Handicapped Library, Lansing Michigan. Miss Haskin states that no applications for services will be processed until she has more assistance, and an increase in personnel. Because of the state budget cuts, this could mean a delay of years or possibly forever. Can you assist Miss Haskin in obtaining federal funds for more personnel? Can you assign us a different regional library that could give services? May we obtain services directly from your section of the Library of Congress? Is Miss Haskin's action legal under public law? Some assistance is sorely needed. What can be done?

Enclosed please find copies of letters to Senators Philip A. Hart and Robert P. Griffin, Congressman Garry E. Brown and President Richard M. Nixon; their help has also been requested.

Please inform the Blind and

Physically Handicapped Library at Lansing, Governor Milliken and myself of any and all assistance and of suggestions you may have.

Thank you for your kind consideration and for answering my questions.

Very Sincerely yours,

Edward F. Parker

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6125 Valley View  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49009  
November 30, 1971

Miss Susan M. Haskin, Head Librarian  
Blind and Physically Handicapped  
Library  
State Library Services  
Department of Education  
735 East Michigan Avenue  
Lansing, Michigan 48913

Dear Miss Haskin:

Thank you for your letter informing me that my application for library services has been received and approved. I can not accept the fact that there is no one in the entire Department of Education, or in the State Library Services that could not be used on a time sharing basis, (one or two hours daily), to process blind and physically handicapped applications for library services. What a sad and disappointing thing this must be for the blind and physically handicapped children, who must wonder why they are the ones being punished because of budget cuts.

Be this as it may, I must take you at

your word that no new applications will be processed and no one will receive services until you have more assistance and more personnel. I must therefore do everything in my power to obtain assistance for you. Please find enclosed, copies of letters I have sent to President Richard M. Nixon, Senators Philip A. Hart and Robert P. Griffin, Governor William G. Milliken, Congressman Garry E. Brown, State Representative William V. Weber, Mr. Robert S. Bray and Mr. James Hahn of the Library of Congress and Mr. Kenneth Jernigan, President of the National Federation of the Blind. Let us hope that some results may be obtained.

Perhaps the next step should be to solicit the services and the support of the public through the mass media (radio, television, newspaper, etc.) Do you believe this could help our cause and be of assistance to you?

Please let me know if I can do anything else in order to help you obtain more assistance.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Very respectfully yours,

Edward F. Parker

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STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
State Library Services  
735 E. Michigan Avenue  
Lansing Michigan 48913

November 10, 1971

Mr. Edward F. Parker  
6125 Valley View  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49009

Dear Mr. Parker:

Your application to utilize the services of the Blind and Physically Handicapped Library has been received and approved.

Unfortunately, we are unable to process your application or any of the others which have been received recently. Staff cutbacks and a freeze on filling vacancies make it impossible for us to process new applications at this time.

We hope the situation will be alleviated but at this time we are unable to give you an approximate date of when this might be. In the meantime, we are stamping the date received on each application and will process them in order of date received when we again have the staff needed to carry out the job.

We are extremely sorry this delay in extending service to you has occurred.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Haskin, Head Librarian  
Blind and Physically Handicapped  
Library

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A VOLUNTEER  
TRANSCRIPTION PROGRAM  
by  
Florence Grannis

[Editor's Note: This paper was delivered by Mrs. Grannis at the Midlands Regional

Library Conference, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, November 1, 2, and 3, 1971.]

What is a volunteer transcription program?

In the sense we are discussing a volunteer transcription program is a program in which unpaid individuals produce books or related materials in a recorded medium (disc, open reel tape, or cassette), Braille, or large type or any combination of these media. It may be so small that only such items as a diabetic diet list or a special school test will be produced or it may be so large that anyone in your community can have whatever he wants transcribed into whatever medium he wants when he wants it and *you* can have any library material you want--be it books, maps, charts, graphs, etc.--when *you* want it.

Most programs are somewhere between these extremes.

It is my belief that no agency that has only the material supplied to it by the Library of Congress, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped can be truly called a library. Each library should have a wealth of local material--city, county, state, regional, which realistically, only it can produce through a transcription service. It should have material of special interest to its borrowers, or potential borrowers. An obvious example is the course material for the Great Books program. As more and more blind people play ordinary roles in community life, more and more special and specific things for these people should be available in their libraries, whether it is Planned Parenthood data, Model City material, price control regulations, drug abuse

information, Toastmistress or Toastmaster handbooks, local wiring codes—you can name it and some blind person somewhere is wanting it or will want it and the library functioning *for* its patrons is supplying it—through a transcription program.

Is it worth the effort to have a volunteer program?

Yes, but you must count on the fact that it really *will* be an effort. If the program is going to be the way *you* want it you should figure it will require, on your part, loving meticulous attention. It's neither fair nor realistic to expect volunteers to altogether manage *your* transcription program. This is not to say that you should not work *with* an established volunteer group, led by volunteers or paid directors, but it is possible to have a greater variety of material produced, when *you* want it produced, and the way *you* want it produced if you have at least *some* volunteers, working directly under your library's sponsorship.

What are the mechanics of the transcription program?

Again the mechanics depend on your desired scope of activity and the framework of your organization. I have brought copies of my article "Beginning a Transcribing Group" (see *Braille Monitor*, June, 1970) which outlines these quite specifically. If more copies are wanted, please let me know and I'll do my best to supply them. I should point out that technological developments mean that a few statements in that article need to be updated. Certain top priority mechanics should be mentioned. Before any assignment is made, the print text MUST

be previewed for any problems. In large type and Braille, these may be special formats; in taping there may be diagrams which will need to be described. Sometimes collation problems can be "headed off" at this time and missing sections of print books located or reproduced without any jeopardy to deadlines.

When books are assigned, send with them an accompanying assignment sheet, stating whether the entire text is to be reproduced, whether indices or chronologies or bibliographies are definitely needed, etc. For books to be Brailled, a special Format Instruction sheet should also be sent along, spelling out line-length, volume size, running heads, sponsorship, etc.

Have a precise, accurate, and current system of record keeping. Since some books will be sent out without specific deadlines, the transcription of these will sometimes drag on. You might, therefore, periodically issue progress reports for transcribers to complete, so that you may plan more meaningfully.

Because Braille is so very fragile, the matter of shipping it can get quite involved. If you will be shipping, you might invest in fiber board mailing containers. A ream of Braille paper may be mailed in a container to the transcriber, who then has a durable carton to return two "raw" volumes of Braille.

Have competent, gracious, diligent certified blind proofreaders. Have a live, viable, enthusiastic, and omnipresent recruitment campaign for volunteers. Have significant, professional quality workshops. Give sincere, meaningful

recognition to all participants for work accomplished. Have as high quality up-to-date equipment as you can manage. Again, with all this, don't spread yourself too thin. One group I saw recently had sophisticated multi-slave tape duplicating equipment, but no one to operate it and no money to buy tapes. Another had an extremely expensive, complex enlarging machine, which could only be operated by a skilled, highly trained technician, so as a result it was idle much of the time.

#### How and where to recruit for volunteers?

Every way and every place. Jewish Temple Sisterhoods have traditionally been transcribers and if they are not now transcribing you may well be able to inspire them to form a group. Telephone Pioneers are already oriented to work with us and certainly some of them will transcribe for your program if you indoctrinate and educate them in that direction. Where else should you look? Women's Clubs, church groups, any kind of service organization. Talk to these people at every opportunity and create your opportunities. Advertise. Have human relation stories in every medium at every opportunity. Recruit your local volunteer bureau to recruit for you. See if your legislative wife group will work with you directly or will find transcribers for you. (There are extra dividends to having these fine women working with you.)

What should you expect to do to sustain a volunteer transcription program?

Follow through. So many such activities start off with a great enthusiastic flourish and then dwindle away. Before beginning a program you should figure

what you want it to accomplish both immediately and on a long term basis--allowing yourself the flexibility to change these aims anywhere down the line. You should calculate what the program is likely to cost you and where the money is going to come from. Too often people feel that *volunteer* programs are *free* because the Brailists, tapists, large typists, and perhaps the coordinators and binders do not charge for their services. Well, such a program is by *no means* free and nothing will kill a budding program more quickly than lack of funds.

What are some of the monies for? Braille writers, large type typewriters, tape recording equipment, possibly binding equipment, mailing containers, paper, magnetic or cassette tape, proofreading by a blind certified proofreader and *much, much* more.

Where might this money come from?

Ideally from whatever source is funding you and, ideally, in *abundant* amounts. If your parent organization cannot or will not supply some or all of the costs of transcribing there are many other ways of coming up with the money but if you have to expend your time and energy on scrounging bucks you will have that much less time and energy to nurture your transcription program and of course, your general library activities. Obviously, a transcription program must never be allowed to get in the way of giving *good* basic library service. Anyway, some of the places to look for money are: your local Lions Club, Telephone Pioneers, Jewish Temple Sisterhoods, Rotary, Moose, Optimist, Soroptimist, Quota or other philanthropic organization; your local chapter of Delta Gamma or Zeta Phi Eta;

maybe you can get your United Fund to back you or perhaps a federal grant or a private foundation will be of assistance. Consistently encourage your organization to be made the beneficiary to memorials and other similar gifts, both as related to your library borrowers and other members of your community. What I am saying is that there are many places to get money and some of the places are *eager* to give it away. Get it from as many sources as you can, keep the ear marking of the funds to the absolute minimum, and recognize that ever present thanks and petting for the funds are just part of the game.

You are not alone in this transcription enterprise. So what are your resources? The National Braille Association, the Library of Congress, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, other well organized transcribing groups such as the Johanna Bureau in Chicago and the California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Handicapped, Inc., our group--the Iowa Commission for the Blind and many, many more. If you need a helping hand just reach out and some one or many some ones will extend theirs to assist.

Make it *right*--standards cannot be *too* high. Every now and again some transcribed material comes into my hand that doesn't have copyright date, table of contents or something similar. See that your transcribers don't slop it up-gently, courteously insist on first class work and provide guide lines to help them do so, with specific assignment sheets for each production, general manuals of procedures, and periodic written and verbal discussions of techniques. Always be in the position of being able to find the answer to the transcribers'

questions--explicitly, in detail and with gracious good humor.

What can you expect to gain from having a volunteer transcription program?

The obvious and direct thing you can gain is a rich collection of library materials specifically and uniquely tailored to your present and potential borrowers. You may be making possible jobs for blind people. You may be amplifying education. You may be enlarging horizons. Your institution may be your people's university, it may be the live essence of hopes and dreams. This treasure trove would be enough to make all your efforts worthwhile but there are definite other benefits. Your transcribers become the best public relations people anywhere! Overwhelmingly transcribers are brighter and more selfless people than non transcribers. They are often well educated, well heeled and socially prominent. Get them to love you, believe in what you are doing (and it is incumbent on you to do so) and they will enhance your transcription activities and your agency. There are other things, too. Often your suppliers will become interested in what you are doing and help you expand. The "media" will relate to your efforts and spread the message.

Always, always, you can know as you make even one life less bleak, less impoverished, less lonely, you are carrying your weight in your world--you are singing and the song is one man *needs* to have sung.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE NATURE OF HONESTY

COPIED FROM A  
BRAILLE LETTER

August 13, 1971

Dear Dr. Jernigan:

As one who reaps the harvest of your *Monitor* without planting the seeds of Federation membership, what I have to say could justifiably be considered inadmissible for consideration at the outset, and yet regardless of what you might or might not think, I am a concerned blind person. And yet I feel that joining the Federation would be analogous to joining another Sunday School and there is enough dissension on that subject in my family already--Sunday Schools: Places where people gather on Sunday morning to utter the same old cliches about brotherly love and social consciousness and tie the bundle together with a few soft words about Christ. After Sunday School and before church, the teacher and some of the good members assemble outside the sanctuary to tell the latest bawdy jokes and talk about how the "niggers" are taking over. I don't fit into Sunday School because I break the rules. Down deep, I might not, indeed, be any better than the other members (very probably I am not) but I have never been one who could let a dead cliche lie. Invariably I break the rules at one time or another and suggest that we do more than utter these sentiments. It is always the same. There is silence, a bit strained, because this fellow who is a little different anyway, being blind, can't seem to learn the rules. Probably I ought to hang in there, patiently, and hope that eventually we will put their cliches to work, but here

lately I find it more comforting--and I know this is wrong--simply to drop out.

How does this relate to the Federation, nationally? I don't think it does, but locally I feel it might--I say "might" because I have not attended meetings. I only hear about what goes on there and I know some of the people who attend them. In these meetings the blind like to talk about educating the public--making the public aware of this or that--and yet many members either shrug away or participate in professions which are far from contributing to the *image* (I am beginning to hate that word) of the blind person. To what extent does or should the Federation as a body or as individual members pressure other blind people into engaging in, say, street begging? Now, Dr. Jernigan, I know what you think--or I think I do. If there were no other way of support for me, street begging it would be, but you know as well as I that in today's society there are few if any instances where this is necessary. Yet, say what we may, street begging still colors the image of the blind in the minds of most of the public--and a public, I am convinced, that cannot consider seriously for responsibility a group whose members from time to time beg. I say group, because I don't seriously believe that the public will ever cease to think of us as a group. The public will always, in my opinion, generalize to some extent about us all from a few individual cases. All of us blind people included do it everyday about any group which may be associated by some trait-geographic, physical, financial, etc. The French are one type of people, Italians another--"Do blind people have more fun?"--Redheads are hot tempered; Fat people like to laugh--and in the Deep South, "Niggers sho' love

Saturday night." We, the blind, are not going to do much as a group about our image until the individuals stop presenting themselves as bad cases of the generalization.

Perhaps I have the appearance of a beggar. I don't know--maybe I react too much to the whole bit about begging--but three times in the past year I have been either mistaken for a beggar, or someone went out of his way to give me a contribution. Once I was standing harmlessly waiting for my bus to come in, and a man was quite anxious to give me a quarter. I was in a restaurant discussing business matters with a colleague, and a diner at the next table wanted to offer me a contribution--and yesterday I was standing in front of a store holding my seven-year-old daughter's little purse while she ran home for the list when someone thought the purse was my receptacle for contributions.

Now, I am not rude to these people. I don't accept their contributions, but I don't make them mad. Among ourselves, as blind people, we'd probably consider the whole matter funny--"Hell, why didn't you take the money!" To a certain degree it may be humorous from an "in group" view, but for the advancement of the blind as a group--at least, to me--it is not at all funny.

You and I wrestled this out briefly on the telephone about a year ago when I mentioned the Federation's money raising efforts--which, in truth, are a long way from actual begging; and, in my estimation, the Federation has no choice but to raise money the best it can to pay for the worthwhile things it does; and yet, in the minds of those who receive your

materials, I wonder. I don't want to generalize; therefore, let me say, "In the minds of some I know," your organization is placed at best on a par with a charitable organization for the eradication of a disease or to help the destitute. Like it or not, this is true. I expect you already know this. In fact, it is likely you have weighed the matter and consider that, in the long run, you come out ahead. I can only tell you a story which happened to me recently. A friend said he read in the paper that blindness was not a handicap but a nuisance, or inconvenience. Then he said facetiously: "I have been asked to contribute to various activities for the blind, but I like to give my money to those who are in need--I have never given to a nuisance or inconvenience before." He went ahead and contributed because I told him your organization was well worth any money he might shake out of his tight wallet, but the question is still there: Is blindness a handicap or a nuisance? I honestly don't know, because both terms are vague at best, and yet it seems to me that there is an inconsistency there somewhere.

But back to our group inside: I know of one extremely dogmatic Federationist from this state whose dogmatism extends far beyond the Federation, whose husband is a professional blind street beggar who at least begs outside his area. The two like to display their material possessions before other blind people and tell them how to live, but they both totally deny the fact that he begs--this despite the fact that everybody knows he does. I know them only slightly myself, and I always ask the other Federation members why they don't put the two down for it. Why do they let them monopolize meetings? Apparently she has such a personality that no one has

the courage to lock horns with her; yet, they all sit around in their Sunday School atmosphere talking about improving the image of the blind.

Now, the purpose of this letter is certainly not to get anybody drummed out of the Federation. That would be presumptuous of me even if I were a member (and totally unforgiveable since I am not). What I want to know is this: Where does Federation philosophy touch us as individuals, and to what extent should an organization pressure its members to be worthy of membership? One reason I haven't joined--not that the Federation isn't doing quite well without me--is that I would have to settle this question within my soul first: Would I be pretending as we do in Sunday School; or, as Lenny Bruce put it: "Are we going to come right out and say something?"

I won't apologize for the disjointed quality of this letter. I am not writing it as a contribution to a formal debate. I am simply writing it to someone I like to think of as a friend, whose magazine and whose writing I enjoy. I am sure your eloquence could demolish much of what I have to say--but your eloquence, if you choose to use it, will not demolish my concern. It is there that action and not eloquence is called for, in or out of the Federation.

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December 2, 1971

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Your letter of August 13 has been on my desk for many months. I have intended to answer it more than once, but

time has never seemed to permit. I have thought of it often. Anyway, here goes:

Your letter contains so many observations and questions I shall not try to respond to all of them individually. It seems to me that what you say can be broken down into a few major areas.

You tell me that you have not joined the Federation because some of the members do not live up to the philosophy of the movement and that, in fact, their actions are often contradictory of that philosophy. You compare this with Sunday School and imply, at least, that one is better off if he does not go to Sunday School because the members do not live up to their professions of faith.

You spoke to me in candor. I appreciate this and hope you will permit me to do likewise. I think your attitude is more hypocritical than the backsliding members of the Federation or the Sunday School. I once knew a girl who said to me: "I am stupid, but at least I know I am stupid."

I replied to her: "What you are really saying is this: Everybody else is stupid, and I am stupid, too; but I am smarter than they are, because, at least, I have the brains to know I am stupid." She was not pleased with my remarks.

It is true that the people who go to Sunday School are not perfect and that some of them are grossly hypocritical, but I contend that Sunday School tends to be a force for good in the world. It has undoubtedly helped some people to be better than they would otherwise have been. If there were no Sunday Schools, would the people you call hypocrites be

less hypocritical or lead better lives--or, alternatively, would they not be even worse? Before we can really believe in a thing or live up to it, we probably have to give lip service to it and feel guilty about not achieving it--perhaps, even backslide from it occasionally. The sociologists tell us there is always "Cultural lag." We almost never live up to the things we profess. So the question is: What should we do about it? If we lower our goals and our professions to the level of our actual daily practice, will we not simply then lower our practice still further? On the other hand, if we set the goals and give lip service to them, are we not more likely to improve our daily practice and move closer to what we profess, even if slowly and slightly?

As it is with Sunday School and life in general, so it is with the Federation. Yes, it is true: There is probably not a single blind person in the world today (present company included) who has not sold himself short and accepted, to some degree or another, the public views about his limitations. There is not one of us who has not, on more than one occasion, professed more than he has accomplished, thereby becoming a hypocrite. But the lives of the blind are better now than they were thirty years ago, and they are infinitely better than they would have been if there had been no Federation.

Your own life (and I think you would admit that this is true) is better because of the Federation. You have told me of services for the blind in your state that need improving and of books not available to you from the libraries for the blind. You have told me how good you thought the Iowa library program was and have said you would like to use it. Yet, the

services in your state would not have been even as good as they are, and the Iowa program for the blind would certainly not be what it is if it had not been for Federation effort. You tell me you enjoy the *Monitor*, but it would not have existed without the Federation. You have received the benefits of the efforts of the organized blind movement, and your life is better as a result. In fact the very members whose shortcomings you castigate have helped make possible what you have. Yet, you do not join--and all in the name of honesty. Is this really honesty? I think not.

I think it is a "cop out," a way of justifying to yourself your unwillingness to help assume the burdens of working with us to try to make things better. True Federationism is not easy. As you observe, our members are sometimes still groping for direction and purpose. Our meetings are sometimes dull. There is bickering, contention, and self-seeking. There is also generosity, hope, determination, and great self-sacrifice--and often, from the same people. In other words, we are a people's movement, with all that that implies. We are also making great progress and are absolutely unstoppable over the long haul.

By now, you have probably read or heard what I said at the banquet of the National Federation of the Blind convention this year in Houston. Part of it goes directly to the point we are discussing and is meant to speak to you. Let me remind you of what I said:

"Next, I want to say something to those blind persons who are aware of our movement and who have had an opportunity to join it but who have not seen fit to do so. In this category I also place those blind persons who are *among*

us but not really *of* us, who (technically speaking) hold membership in the Federation but are not really part of the movement. The non-Federation and the non-committed blind are a strange phenomenon. Some of them are successful in business or the professions. I have heard them say: 'I really don't need the Federation. Of course, if I could do anything to help you people, I would be glad to do it, but I am independent. I have made it on my own.' I have heard them say: 'You really can't expect me to go down to that local meeting of the blind. Nobody goes there except a few old people, who sit around and drink coffee and plan Christmas parties. I am a successful lawyer, or businessman, or judge; and I am busy. Besides, they never get anything done. They just talk and argue.' I have heard them say: 'I don't know that I necessarily have anything in common with other blind people just because I'm blind. Almost all my friends are sighted. My life is busy with bowling, hiking, reading, or my business or profession.' I have heard them say: 'You people in the Federation are too aggressive. You are always in a fight with somebody, or bickering among yourselves. I am an individualist and never was much of a joiner.'

"I have heard some of them say: 'I am an employee of a governmental or private agency doing work with the blind, and I think it would destroy my professional relationship with my clients if I were to work actively in the Federation. Anyway, we all have a common concern, the betterment of blind people; so I'll make my contribution by working as a 'professional' in the field. Besides, not all blind people agree with you or want to join your organization, and as a

'professional' I have to represent and work with *all* blind people.'

"I have heard them say all of these things, and to such blind persons I say this: You are patsies! Not only that but you are also deceiving yourselves and failing to act in your own best interest. Further, you are profiting from the labor and sacrifice, and are riding on the backs, of the blind who have joined the movement and worked to make it possible for you to have what you have. Some of you feel superior to many of the blind who belong to the Federation (especially those who work in the sheltered shops or draw welfare), but your feelings of superiority are misplaced; for collectively these people have clothed you and fed you. They have made it possible for you to have such equality in society and such opportunity as you now enjoy. Resent what I say if you will, but it is the truth, whether you like it or not and whether you admit it or not. It is true for those of you who work in the agencies as well as for those of you who work in private endeavor.

"If you think this movement should be better or that it should be of higher caliber, then join us and help make it that way. If you think the local meetings or the State conventions are dull or uninspiring, then do your part to make them different. Even animals in the jungle have sense enough to hunt in packs. The blind ought to be at least as intelligent.

"We need you, and we want you as active participants in the movement; but until you will join, we must do the best we can without you. We must carry you on our backs and do your work for you, and we will do it. The fact that we say you are

patsies does not mean that we resent you. Far from it. You are our brothers, and we will continue to look upon you as such, regardless of how irresponsibly you behave. We are trying to get you to think about the implications of your actions. We are trying to get you to join with us to help make things better for other blind people and for yourselves. We are trying to get you to stop being patsies."

This is what I said at Houston, and I don't know how to say it any more clearly or directly. There is another point in your letter which requires comment. You say that you question whether the Federation's fundraising efforts may not reinforce the stereotypes about blindness and you say that you believe the public will always lump us together as a group and judge all of us by a few--the most undesirable few, at that, I presume. It would probably be better if there were no necessity to raise money at all, but there is. It is probably also true that very few people give money without some reinforcement of their feelings of superiority, but the question is one of alternatives. We ought to raise the money we need with the minimum amount of sympathy and reinforcement of the stereotype. On the other hand, the thousands of blind men and women who have been encouraged by the existence of the Federation to compete on terms of equality in society could not have been helped by an organization without means. The string of legal cases we have won in the last few years, the legislative victories, and the new jobs which have been opened are milestones of progress. If we do not start somewhere, we will always stay exactly where we are. The ultimate test of what we are doing is that it works. The blind are making progress, and the public image is changing.

The caliber of the rank and file member of the Federation is better today than it was a generation ago. If we are on the right track, it will be better still in the decades ahead.

Any minority group which has lived in second-class citizenship will have troubles in the beginning of its self-organization. If all of the blind were well-fixed financially, well educated, intelligent, knowledgeable, well trained, thoroughly consistent in their philosophy, and filled with self-confidence, there would be no need for an organized blind movement. We must take people as they are and do our best to help them become better, not simply say that they do not live up to the goals and ideals to which they aspire.

At least, this is the way I see it, and this is why I am a Federationist. I believe the National Federation of the Blind is the greatest force for improvement in the lives of blind people which exists in this country today. I believe the Federation has done more than any other single entity to help the blind achieve equality, independence, and self-respect. It is for this reason that I am a member and a worker in the cause. It is also for this reason that I hope you will reconsider your position and join with us. We need you, and I believe you need the movement.

You say that you want action, not eloquence. I reply that the Federation is where the action is and that you should stop philosophizing and begin to help.

Cordially,

Kenneth Jernigan, President  
National Federation of the Blind

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NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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HOWARD BROWN RICKARD SCHOLARSHIP FUND

*Nature of Scholarship*

The Howard Brown Rickard Scholarship, administered by the National Federation of the Blind, is to be awarded each year to legally blind university students studying for a professional degree as specified below. Scholarships vary from year to year as to number and amount. Payments will be made, one-half at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters, or one-third at the beginning of each of three quarters.

This scholarship was established by a bequest of Thomas E. Rickard in honor of his father, Howard Brown Rickard.

*Who is Eligible*

Any legally blind university student in the professions of LAW, MEDICINE, ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURE, AND THE NATURAL SCIENCES, including undergraduates in these fields is eligible to apply.

While anyone may apply for the award, in order to be considered he must:

a) be sponsored by the State affiliate where he is going to school or in the State where he makes his home, and if there be no such affiliate he must secure sponsorship in a manner deemed appropriate by the chairman of the scholarship committee.

b) attend the NFB Convention at which the scholarship is to be awarded.

*How to Apply*

Fill out completely the attached application and mail to Allen Jenkins, Chairman, Rickard Scholarship Committee, National Federation of the Blind, 2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley, California 94708, by May 1.

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## HOWARD BROWN RICKARD SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Applicant's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

(Permanent) Street \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

High School Attended \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

College Now Attending \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Units Completed by End of Present Term \_\_\_\_\_

Colleges Previously Attended: (Indicate the year you attended college and total number of units completed at each college.)

\_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ Units \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ Units \_\_\_\_\_

Major Subject \_\_\_\_\_

List name and amount of any scholarships you have received or are receiving:

Attach the following:

1. Transcripts from all colleges attended. (If you are entering college, attach high school transcript.)
2. A statement in 250 words of your reason for applying for this scholarship and how it will assist you to achieve a professional goal including, if you wish, information about your financial situation. Please include information about your visual acuity indicating whether you are partially or totally blind.
3. Recommendation of sponsoring NFB affiliate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature

Make sure all spaces are filled in and mail application by May 1 to:

Allen Jenkins, Chairman  
Rickard Scholarship Committee  
National Federation of the Blind  
2652 Shasta Road  
Berkeley, California 94708



## MEET OUR STATE PRESIDENT--DICK PARKER AND MEET OUR STATE AFFILIATE--NEBRASKA

Where does one begin to describe himself? I guess the best place is at the beginning. I was born in Council Bluffs, Iowa (one of six children). We moved to Hastings, Iowa when I was five. I attended school there through the eighth grade. We moved back to Council Bluffs in 1959 after the death of my father. I attended high school in Council Bluffs. After graduating from barber school in Omaha, I worked as a barber until at age twenty-two I lost my sight due to diabetes.

I worked as a machine operator for a local company until it went bankrupt in 1970. I am now the president of my own small manufacturing company which makes pet products. I have a lovely wife, who is also a staunch Federationist, and three children. What more can I say except that I have never been happier or prouder than I am now since becoming an NFB member last January.

We the blind in Nebraska have just awakened from a long nap. Since reorganizing in January, 1971, we have thus far been able to secure passage of the Model White Cane Bill and also remove the lien law against not only the blind but the



disabled and elderly. We hope in the near future to introduce and secure passage of the little Randolph-Sheppard Act.

We started our new existence in January with a rousing attendance of one hundred. Our State-wide membership is approaching the neighborhood of two hundred sixty. We have local affiliates in North Platte, Grand Island, Lincoln, and two in the Omaha metropolitan area. All five locals

worked on a fundraising drive which took place in October. Each local affiliate determined for itself the manner in which it wished to raise funds. All affiliates participated at the same time, contributing fifty percent of the profits to the State treasury and retaining the other half.

We in the NFB of Nebraska are proud to have joined with you and President Jernigan on the barricades. We have just begun but begun we have. President Jernigan on the first occasion I met him asked me a very embarrassing question. I feel it might not only be appropriate for us in Nebraska but for every blind person to ask himself the same question, "Why haven't you joined the blind movement before now?"

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## INDIANA CONVENTION

by

Robert F Lancaster

and

John Janssens

The annual convention of the Indiana Council of the Blind was held at the LaSalle Motor Inn in South Bend on September 24, 25, and 26, 1971. The board of directors met at 7:30 while the incoming delegates registered and enjoyed a social evening supplied by the host affiliate, the Northern Indiana Center of the Blind. Entertainment included dancing to the music supplied by the president of that chapter, John Escobedo, and his band. President Getz called the convention to order on Saturday morning. Following the invocation, the singing of one verse of a hymn and the pledge of allegiance to the flag, two addresses of welcome, one from a representative of the Mayor's office of South Bend and another from a representative of the city of Mishawaka were heard. A response to these welcoming addresses was given by John Escobedo, convention chairman. Roll Call of the chapters found seven chapters represented. Melvin Williams started off with a brief talk on "Unity." Paul Watson, from the local Social Security office spoke about the many facets of Social Security disability sections, including quite a detailed account of Social Security disability for the blind as administered by his department. Door prizes were abundant between speeches and Mr. Huntley Hornbeck's interesting history of Lions International and account of some of the variety of work engaged in by the local Mishawaka Lions Club which includes work with and for the blind.

Mr. R. Richart of Fort Wayne,

chairman of the legislative committee, explained what was done during the year on legislation. Mr. Raymond Handley, director of the Indiana Agency for the Blind explained the duties of his office staff and how they worked with the blind. Mr. Fox, director of the United Health Foundation of St. Joseph County, told of the efforts of his group to contact and improve the situation of the neglected handicapped and aged.

The election of officers for the coming two years resulted in the following: President, Robert Lancaster, Indianapolis; vice-president, Marc Maurer, South Bend; recording secretary, Raymond Wagner, Evansville; associate secretary, Edward Dennemann, Indianapolis; treasurer, Laurell Raubb, Indianapolis; and associate treasurer, Ed Kennenan.

The banquet was the largest and most enthusiastic ever. NFB First Vice-President Donald Capps received a rousing welcome when he addressed those assembled. Among the honored guests at the banquet were Mr. and Mrs. John Janssens, President Russell Getz and his wife, Professor John Hritz of Notre Dame, and Right Reverend Monsignor John S. Szabo, Pastor of Our Lady of Hungary Catholic Church. In the social hour which followed the banquet there was music by the "Casual Bets Barbershop Quartet." There was also a raffle drawing for a \$1000 savings bond and a \$500 savings bond as well as many door prizes. The State-wide raffle was our fundraising project this year.

On Sunday morning there was a financial report from our treasurer and a report on the National Federation of the

Blind Convention in Houston by our president, Russell Getz. The delegates chosen to represent our organization in Chicago were Robert Lancaster and alternate Jerry McGill. Indianapolis was chosen as the site of the next annual State convention.

I regret to have to insert this note of sadness into the account of a very enjoyable and successful State convention, but Ray Wagner, who was elected associate secretary, passed away on October 7, and our deep sympathy goes out to his family and friends and his chapter in Evansville, Indiana. He will be a hard man to replace in this office.

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#### THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE

by  
Jim Doherty

"We've been trying to move that Board of Education for fourteen years, but it wasn't until the National Federation of the Blind got involved that anything was accomplished." Believe it or not, these are the words of a rehab counselor in Washington, D. C. He was talking about a recent surge of activity within the D. C. public schools regarding the education of blind children. It didn't come about easily.

In the past, most blind students from the District of Columbia were sent to the Maryland School for the Blind, with a few being enrolled in the District's own "vision program." In the fall of 1970, the Board of Education imposed a \$4,000 per student ceiling on tuition paid to schools outside the District. Since Maryland's tuition was then over \$5,000, the Board could not afford to send its twenty-five

students--it said. Under pressure from the Capital Chapter NFB, seven children were brought into the vision program and eighteen were allowed to continue at Maryland. At that same time, the Superintendent of Schools in the District proclaimed great concern for special education in general and the needs of the blind in particular. There was talk of a high level task force to revamp the Special Education Division and a special committee to oversee that division's operations and make additional improvements. The Capital Chapter was promised a share in the work of both bodies. They never happened. Instead, the school system resumed its habitual non-interest in the education of blind children.

Frequent contacts with school officials during the spring and summer produced little more than talk. Then, in August of 1971, the parents of the students who had attended the Maryland School were informed that the tuition ceiling would be strictly adhered to in the fall of 1971. For most families this meant that school was over for their blind children. Some of the parents came to the September meeting of the Capital Chapter and a letter was drafted which they sent to Dr. John Johnson, newly appointed Associate Superintendent of Schools for Special Education. The letter detailed the plight of the blind students and pointed out the city's responsibility to provide educational opportunities for them. Later that month, Dr. Johnson appeared before the D. C. Citizens for Better Public Education to outline his plans for improving his division. Several Federationists attended that meeting and put some rather pointed questions to the speaker. He manfully admitted a lack of

information on the problems of blind children in the District, having just received the parents' letter that afternoon. But he promised that all would be in school as soon as possible. And he delivered. The following week, the former Maryland students were taken into the vision program. This meant that the District's program was now overcrowded, understaffed, and woefully short of money.

During the summer, the vision program's only Braille teacher was transferred to a new position. Janiece Conard, who is totally blind, applied for the job as Braille teacher. The public schools' personnel office immediately rejected her application because she is blind, completely ignoring her many other outstanding qualifications. The director of the vision program, who has no control over the personnel office wrote a strong memo to his superiors recommending that Janiece be hired, and she resubmitted her application.

By time for the Chapter's October meeting, new President Gale Conard and several other members were convinced that progress, though measurable, was coming much too slowly and that a crisis-to-crisis approach was not the answer. Bardyl Tirana, a sympathetic member of the District Board of Education, was invited to the meeting and participated in the long discussion of the problem, making several recommendations. He suggested first that the Chapter demand of the Superintendent of Schools a written statement of the District's plan for educating blind children; second, that if nothing concrete was done soon, the Chapter should organize a sit-in or other

form of demonstration to call public attention to the situation; third, that if the school system could not come up with a workable plan, the Chapter should write its own program and even consider taking over its operation under contract to the Board of Education. The demand letter was prepared next day and delivered the following morning to the Superintendent of Schools and Associate Superintendent Johnson. While awaiting a reply, several Federationists prepared an outline for a sound program to educate blind children. President Conard undertook to write the proposal.

Then, during a meeting of the Board of Education at which Dr. Johnson and the Superintendent of Schools urged a substantial increase in the special education budget, Gale and Janiece confronted Johnson on the questions of her application and the letter. As a result, he called a meeting of all concerned parties to discuss the whole situation. Besides the Capital Chapter, he invited parents, teachers, Mr. Tirana, the vision program staff, even the ACB. Before the meeting took place, Johnson had prepared his own program proposal, and, after some specialized bugging of his staff, he had hired Janiece as Braille Teacher.

At the meeting, it was made clear that Dr. Johnson's proposal was only that. It would be considered along with all suggestions from others, with the final result to be a definitive statement of the District's plan to educate blind children within its own school system. The Special Education staff is meeting weekly on the statement. Much of their time will be devoted to the detailed program proposed by the Capital Chapter (which, incidentally, has been called since

November the NFB of D.C.). The completed program statement is to be considered at another general meeting the first week in January.

This report does not begin to cover the long hours of discussion, the many phone calls, the writing and rewriting of letters and statements that have been the major activity of many Federationists here in the nation's capital. Our determination to bring about a program that will truly provide Washington's blind children with an education at least equal to that of sighted children is obvious to everyone, most of all to the public school officials in the District of Columbia. The accelerated progress of the past few months demonstrates that we can succeed--and we will.

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KANSAS CONVENTION  
by  
Walter Long

The third annual convention of the Sunflower Federation of the Blind was held at the Town House Hotel November 5, 6, and 7, 1971. It was attended by more than one hundred persons. Delegates came from Lawrence, Topeka, and Wichita, Kansas. The convention began with Friday evening meetings of the Legislative, Executive, Nominating, and Resolutions Committees.

The Saturday session was opened by the president, Dick Edlund. Among the speakers were U. S. Senator Bob Dole; U. S. Representative Bill Roy; James Wann, director of social welfare, Wyandotte County; Gardner Hart, veterans federal employment

representative; and Royce Misengo from the office of social security. Jana Sims gave a student organizations report. Mr. Harry Hayes, director of services for the blind in Kansas, assisted by five members of his staff discussed the work of the department. State Representative Carlos Cooper also attended the Saturday meeting.

Hon. Blake Williamson who served as master of ceremonies at the banquet on Saturday was presented the Jacobus tenBroek Award for outstanding service to the blind of Kansas. Mr. Williamson is considered "Mr. Republican" of Wyandotte County. State Senator Charles Hinckley and State Representative Fred Rosenau attended the banquet. Kenneth Hopkins, director of the Idaho Commission for the Blind was the speaker at the banquet.

The convention was made more enjoyable by the question and answer sessions conducted by the speakers and the drawing of many fine prizes.

Dick Edlund was elected president and Raymond Graber vice-president. Three new board members were also elected. Wichita was selected as the site for the 1972 convention. The name of the Sunflower Federation of the Blind was changed to National Federation of the Blind of Kansas.

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KENTUCKY FIGHTS FOR SERVICES

Now it is out. State reorganization plans, especially those involving rehabilitation and welfare programs, are "purely professional" decisions. Designed

to consolidate services, they plead administrative and fiscal convenience and usually ignore statutory directives set up in most states to protect those whom the services are supposed to benefit.

Experience in a number of States has shown that reorganization programs involving umbrella agencies in most instances do nothing but harm to State services to the blind. It is a sad truth that when the new programs become operative, the blind discover that the channels for requesting new, improved, or different services have been closed or lost in the new administrative hierarchies. Directors of services for the blind in many cases no longer issue rule-making decisions or policy regulations. Instead, they become clerks who carry out directives from above. Policies for divisions for the blind are set somewhere else, usually by personnel which has no contact, and which never had contact, with a client group. This isolation from the realities of clients' lives is supposed to make it possible to be more objective. However, the sterility in which these decisions are made makes them more "objectionable" than "objective."

The organized blind of Kentucky, led by Kentucky Federation of the Blind is putting up vigorous resistance to the reorganization proposed for that State, as can be seen from the following news story.

MERGER OF AGENCIES  
OPPOSED BY BLIND  
by  
Sy Ramsey

[Reprinted by permission from the Louisville (Ky.) *Courier-Journal*.]

Representatives of the blind in Kentucky have expressed dismay over a plan to consolidate social and rehabilitation services into one state agency.

The tenor of the protest is that such a merger would make the blind lose their identity and become submerged in a welfare pool they shun.

The current state agency for the blind is the Bureau of Rehabilitation in the Education Department. The bureau includes a Division of Services for the Blind.

Child Welfare Commissioner George Perkins, who disclosed the existence of the consolidation plan two weeks ago, said it is "purely professional" and could be accepted by any administration.

Outgoing Republican Governor Louie B. Nunn never commented on the proposals and Democratic Governor elect Wendell Ford has his own plans for a widespread government reorganization, the details of which have not been revealed.

The governor's advisory committee to the Division of Services for the Blind has passed a resolution objecting strongly to any change.

"The philosophy of the Division of Services is aimed at promotion of the education and employment of the blind," it said. "The philosophy of welfare programs for the blind tends to maintain the blind in poverty and these two philosophies are diametrically opposed and irreconcilable."

R. E. Whitehead, president of the Kentucky Federation of the Blind, said the current Bureau of Rehabilitation operates vending stands all across the state and provides the best employment opportunities the blind have ever had.

"It is not a welfare program," he said. "It is one where blind people earn a living and pay taxes. We would be outraged by an executive order that would wipe out the legislation establishing the business enterprises program of the Bureau of Rehabilitation."

Mrs. Betty J. Nicely, president of the Louisville Association of the Blind, said she feels the education and rehabilitation needs of the blind "could never be served effectively under an 'umbrella' agency."

A spokesman in Ford's office indicated the objections of the blind would be carefully considered in any reorganization procedure.

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Lyman V. Ginger, candidate for Superintendent of Public Instruction in Kentucky, pledged, in a letter dated October 29, 1971 to Arthur Kopp chairman of the Kentucky Federation's legislation committee, "If Governor Nunn transfers the Bureau [of Vocational Rehabilitation] and if we are elected, we shall transfer it back immediately."

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**BLIND FUTURES TRADER**  
by  
George Beardsley

[Reprinted with permission from the

*Chicago Tribune.*]

Probably the most demanding job in the commodity business is that of the trader who buys and sells futures contracts on the floor of an exchange. Trading at the Chicago Board of Trade is so frenetic that many successful commodity men choose to have someone else execute their trades rather than go into the pit themselves.

Though it can be extremely profitable, it's a tough way for anyone to make a living. Although he has been trading for nineteen years, many still consider it amazing that Robert N. Meyer, Jr., who has been blind since childhood, is able to trade so successfully.

In the soybean pit, where Meyer now concentrates his attention, on an average day there will be about two hundred traders competing to buy and sell at the best possible price, using hand signals and hollering to negotiate with other traders.

Meyer said he is able to recognize the voices of about ninety percent of the men who trade regularly on the exchange and that way he is able to tell who has sold him bean futures or whom he has sold to.

The Board of Trade has a variety of equipment to show what is happening in other markets--news concerning commodities flows in on numerous teletype machines, and a large map indicates weather conditions throughout the country. For many traders this information is invaluable. Meyer is able to do without any of these visual aids.

"If there is some really important news on the wire, a friend will call me and

the news gets talked about in the pit, so I can keep up on what's going on," Meyer said. Like many of the real pros, Meyer can tell a lot about what's going on in the market by the noise in the pit, the same noise that is a chaotic din to the casual observer. For example, Meyer noted that a bear and a bull market sound entirely different and he can tell them apart even without hearing the prices. Meyer's father and uncle were both grain traders and he has been trading since July, 1952, one month after he was graduated from Knox College with a degree in economics. . . .

His memory is a vital factor in his ability to trade soybeans. Other traders list each trade on a card, recording whether they bought or sold, who was on the other side of the transaction, and the price. Meyer is able to memorize these details until an assistant is available to write them down. And that represents a large amount of data when one is trading more than a million bushels of grain a day. Friends read newspaper articles to him and of course he talks with colleagues to learn their views on the market.

Sometimes he has also turned to airport weather information when the weather has been an important factor in the market. Since Meyer and his wife Mildred have their own plane, he knows the phone numbers of air weather stations throughout the country. "Mildred, of course, is the pilot," he quipped.

Meyer shares an office with William A. O'Brien, another member of the Board of Trade whom he met fifteen years ago when they were trading wheat. He stresses that O'Brien is a valuable help by assisting him in filling out various reports and keeping records up to date.

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## PROFILE OF AN EDITOR

by

Elverna Kezar

[Editor's Note: The following delightful piece appeared in the Minnesota *Bulletin*, publication of the Minnesota Organization of Blind.]

When President Erickson (I curtsy, sir) told me there were forty-five applicants ahead of me for the position of *Bulletin* editor, I felt I should state my qualifications.

"Who," he said with appropriate adjectives, "is Elverna Kezar?" I could see I had my work cut out for me.

So I told him I was born at an early age on January 2, in Forestberg, South Dakota. Soon after I became known as Elverna Nasby, I was shipped to the Minnesota Braille and Sight Saving School, where I completed the tenth grade with a minimum of skirmishes with J. C. Lysen and B. L. Berhow. After my junior year in Phoenix, Arizona, my senior year at Coos Bay, Oregon, one year at the University of Oregon and an unfinished year at the University of Minnesota, I gave up education as a lost cause.

Could he be snoring? No, presidents don't snore. He was probably just overwhelmed by the thought of all that training.

So I proceeded to tell him I have worked in laundries, hotels, drug stores, dime stores, and at the Minneapolis Society. Since I never could get to work on time, I got married in 1953 to Donald Kezar and became a housewife. We have two girls, seventeen year old Pamela who

never lets her education interfere with her social life, and ten year old Diane who never lets anything interfere with her talking.

President Erickson (I curtsy again, sir) mumbled that one's private life had little to do with one's being an editor. Well, I have other qualifications also, you can be sure.

For instance, I have been manager of the Blind of Minnesota Credit Union most of the time since its birth in 1959. I have been treasurer of the United Blind and the Minnesota Organization of Blind, entertainment chairman for the UB and MOB, and public relations chairman for the MOB.

"But an editor has to write editorials about current problems concerning the blind."

Well, my dear sir, I am not without experience along those lines. I helped assemble the newspaper in Miss Johnson's fourth grade English class. I also write letters to my parents at least twice a year. I am well versed on political, social and economic levels of problems concerning the blind, having sold tickets in the hall at the NFB Convention, attended an MOB dance in 1968 and bought a deck of cards as late as 1970 from Nellie Ask's Sales Service Department.

"Mrs. Kezar," sighed President Erickson (I curtsy once more, sir) "If you will only shut up, you may have the job."

I shut up.

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DAYTON GROUP HOSTS  
COMMUNITY DINNER  
by  
Robert M. Eschbach

The Dayton, Ohio, dinner meeting has become an annual event primarily for the purpose of bringing community awareness into the efforts by the organized blind. This year the dinner was held at the Senior Citizens Center in Dayton and served a twofold function. It provided the DCB with excellent facilities and food for good climate; both for the dinner and for the speeches and brought community also into the Senior Citizens Center itself to learn more of its activities.

Mark Kaiser provided before dinner music on the organ while people were gathering. Hostesses made up of both blind and sighted members of the DCB welcomed the guests and escorted them to the tables as well as a tour of the facilities of Senior Citizens. The dinner was prepared by Margaret Lloyd, Director of the Senior Citizens Center and the kitchen staff. Dennis Wyant, member of the local affiliate, served as master of ceremonies for the dinner.

John Nagle, Chief of the Washington Office of the National Federation of the Blind, was the guest speaker at the community dinner held by the Dayton Council of the Blind on November 4. His topic, "The Right to Be Equal, Blind." brought into sharp focus the philosophy of the National Federation of the Blind both for the members of the DCB and the community people who were present. What he had to say was not only stimulating to the membership of the Dayton Council of the Blind, but helped to give an increasing awareness to the

community of the purposes for which the DCB was organized.

The crowd was entertained by the Xenia High School Senior Ensemble which presented a series of folk music which was excellent. Awards were presented to Ray Creech, the immediate past president of the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio and to his wife for their contribution to the advancement of the organized blind movement. Specifically, however, the awards to Ray and his wife Judy were presented in recognition of their work in having developed the Dayton Council of the Blind from its inception a little over three years ago to its present vigorous and active pace. The DCB is now one of the most active affiliates in the State of Ohio. Another award was presented to Stanley Doran of Columbus. This presentation had originally been made at the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio's convention in Toledo but Stan was not available to receive it. He brought a delegation of members from the new affiliate in Columbus to our dinner and we were pleased to be able to present him with his award for being the outstanding blind person in the State of Ohio during the past year.

It should be said that John Nagle spent two days in Dayton and was instrumental in developing some new contacts for the local affiliate in terms of its relationship to rehabilitation services available to the community. He had opportunity to appear on a radio talk show on WAVI as well as being interviewed by the Dayton Daily News. He was involved in several luncheons and a number of individual interviews.

It is with pleasure and pride that we

present this report because with the support of the National Federation of the Blind we were able to develop this dinner for the community. We were also able to strengthen our ties with rehabilitation services available in the area through the Goodwill Industries. The enthusiasm with which John shared himself with us has been contagious and has moved us forward in our determination to fulfill the philosophy of the organized blind movement of America.

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WIDER HORIZONS FOR  
OUR SENIOR BLIND  
by  
Carolyn Helmer

[Editor's Note: Mrs. Carolyn Helmer of Los Angeles is Executive Director of Active Blind, Inc. which conducts a recreational and educational adult program for the blind, by the blind.]

All of us are growing older. Someday we will all reach the status of senior citizen. However, chronological age has very little to do with the young spirit. This we know from observing some of our youthful creative leadership in the more mature segment of our blind population. Your Federation has always been in the vanguard of concern for senior citizens. Now the President of the Federation, Kenneth Jernigan, has announced the study of a complete program for the senior blind. Several months ago a National Consultant for the Senior Blind was appointed to aid in the formation of our national program. President Jernigan launched the program at the state level on October 16th at the California Council of the Blind convention in Los Angeles. All

Federationists know how much effort has been given to the senior citizen in the areas of health, income, housing, and the like but according to President Jernigan, the new program will correlate these efforts. "More specific plans for implementing our program will be announced later, then each chapter will be encouraged to have a special division," said President Jernigan. Sometimes criticisms are leveled at various blind groups on the basis of exploiting the younger blind at the expense of the majority of our blind citizenry. As a matter of fact, statements are made that ninety percent of the total funding for the blind is spent on ten percent of the exploitable blind. The Federation program will be specifically aimed at areas that are closest to the needs of the senior group.

#### INCOME

Naturally the enjoyment of a challenging and interesting life is largely determined by income. The old cliche of "What's second to money" has some merit. To a large extent a poverty income limits all areas of housing, social and recreational life, health and morale. The older people living on a fixed income, whether it be pensions, Social Security or welfare, find rising costs of living pinching hard. Therefore, every opportunity must be utilized in the following areas:

1. To implement cost of living clauses in all pension plans.
2. To include cost of living in welfare programs.
3. To endorse all Social Security reforms.
4. To involve ourselves in all programs

of dollar stretching in the area of careful food buying and budgeting.

5. To identify with all senior citizen efforts to save money on housing, recreation and transportation.

#### HOUSING

We have found in the area of housing that the blind are often discriminated against. Some landlords panic at the sight of a blind prospective tenant. We, of course, do have some legislation in this area but it is not always easy to legislate social change. We found in one area, for example, that the blind were being left out of the Los Angeles Housing Authority's leasing program. Other senior citizens had the advantage of subsidies where the blind were excluded. The Federation has much work to do in this area as housing programs are now being sponsored by the city, county, and private organizations. The housing needs of our seniors must be carefully weighed in respect to accessibility to transportation and markets. The dependence of some of our older blind on volunteer drivers precludes out-of-the-way locations. Whoever is in charge of our "Wider Horizons" program at whatever level should become involved in utilizing all available public facilities.

#### HEALTH

Exercise and good nutrition are prime requisites of a healthy regime. Many of our older blind citizens are adventitiously blind and adaptation in the less resilient years is difficult. Health facilities seem to be the last resources blind centers provide. Swimming is an excellent exercise for our older blind but few centers provide this opportunity. If our needs were properly formulated, it is quite possible that we might get more

cooperation from private pool owners, provided safety measures were adhered to. Special diets are often of concern to blind people with a diabetic condition. From time to time dietary regulations should be reviewed from the viewpoint of general health. Convalescent homes are generally substandard. The blind should join in the efforts to raise the quality of their services.

#### MOBILITY

Mobility is a major problem of the senior blind. Yet even in an urban center like Los Angeles, it is impossible to obtain sufficient mobility services for the following reasons:

- 1) The State does not consider it worthwhile to spend money on rehabilitating an older person. Hence, there is no purchase of mobility instruction time.
- 2) When a small center asks for mobility help from the State, the State protests the lack of a five-day program. Yet the State itself provides only a one-day program under its counselor-teacher and that for one hour only.
- 3) There is cumulative emphasis on professionalism in peripatology. HEW makes grants with all emphasis on the employable blind. The older blind, to whom a fall could be fatal, are completely neglected. A trained semi-professional high school graduate could help. In the case of the older blind, it is half a loaf that is better than none in the field of mobility.

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL NEEDS

Sometimes it is difficult for the younger blind to realize the adjustment

shock of the adventitiously blind. It is a universal truth in psychology that physically we all like to be like everyone else. Any departure has an effect.

To the younger blind, blindness is sometimes called a "characteristic" or an "inconvenience." But to an older blind person who has oriented his life to sight, it can be a "damned nuisance." Sometimes the cross-over requires counseling and this counseling should be by either a professional or a semi-professional who has made that crossing. The writer had the opportunity of discussing this with Eric Fromm. Dr. Fromm says that he felt that one of the blind psychiatrists he was training in Mexico would have the best facility in this field. The blind have not emphasized enough the importance of their lay or semi-professional helpers.

In the field of counseling, it is the alcoholic who does the good job with AA. In rehabilitation of ex-prisoners, it is the ex-convict who can talk to the parolees. So it should be in counseling the adventitiously blind. The loss of independence is also a serious threat to inner security. The older person whose bank balance has been his own business for many years suddenly feels helpless. Also when that person has been able to go out the front door and jump into his own car and suddenly cannot, he is stymied. When he reads with his fingers what his eyes conveyed, he feels as if he has to start all over again in mid-stream. The new "social role" is sometimes devastating.

#### EDUCATION

In our earlier school years we conquered the three R's but the three R's in later years for the adventitiously blind are: Reacceptance, Reevaluation and

## Renewal.

There are often many places where the older blind can learn to weave, do ceramic work, sew, and all type of hand work, but blindness is a disability that crosses all types of society and there are many blind people who do not care for these challenges. Many of our older blind would like to continue their professional education in various fields of teaching, social work, or whatever their background has equipped them for. But there is a cut-off point for funding for the older blind that is a disadvantage. The on-going learning process, of course, is augmented by our recording facilities of books and tapes. All encouragement should be given in this area for more specialized types of books. Adult education is a field that is open to all and if adult education cannot be integrated into a center, then some attempt should be made to see that blind people can participate in the on-going careers program of the Adult Education System in various cities.

## VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a new factor in the older person's vocabulary. Sometimes his family becomes a little distant because they are called upon too often to take Auntie to the store.

The area of obtaining and retaining volunteers is a whole field in itself. The blind person should be educated to have all his work prepared for the volunteer and to limit the time that is so freely granted. The reasons for the abuse of volunteer services are self-evident in that generally the blind person has too little volunteer service and when he gets it, he is tempted to demand too much. The good-natured volunteer says "yes" once too often and

because of the excessive demand, stops volunteering altogether. This field will be explored more fully in a later article.

## RECREATION

The writer recently conducted a Harbor Tour Day in Los Angeles. Some of our older blind said, "that was the most fun I had all year." Much more emphasis should be given to recreational outings. Many of our chapters preclude many social activities so that in the city of Los Angeles there is a proliferation of Blind Clubs. Some of these are for social service, such as visiting the sick. Many are for dancing only. Some, like Toastmistress, are for self-help. The organized blind cannot get too involved in the immediacy of current problems and legislation to the exclusion of the needs of the total personality. In our "Wider Horizons" program we must be flexible and learn to diversify. Involvement of all of our people must be our goal.

## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is a major problem for the blind. We must explore every avenue that eases this situation.

For our "shut-in" blind, in their dismal little rooms, we should combine our efforts with programs like that of "mobile meals" now being introduced into our East Los Angeles area. In this little community organization, shoppers could be rotated in various housing complexes just as meal cooking and baby care are in Europe. For the more mobile blind, fare discounts have been established. In other cities certain hours have been established for the older people to ride busses at a reduced fare.

In the area of transportation the

volunteer is once more of paramount importance. When a group of blind people go together, an offer should be made to cover minimal expenses when the trip is a longer one. Courtesy should be forever underscored. All around the United States and abroad also, the senior blind are making enormous contributions both in and out of the professions. Their participation will constantly widen as they bring new fields into the scope of our collective group activity.

We want to especially acknowledge our debt to NFB for all its pioneer work in the area of the senior blind and to salute President Jernigan for his innovative program.

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### NEW WORLD

The State of Iowa has published the Annual Report of the Iowa Commission for the Blind for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1971, entitled **NEW WORLD**. The report is copiously illustrated with meaningful photographs. The Iowa Commission has over the past thirteen years translated the philosophy and goals of the organized blind movement into practical agency achievements as evidenced by the succession of highly adjusted and eminently successful students who have gone forth from the Commission into full and abundant living. For this reason we quote at length from the text of the report.

The real problem of blindness is not the loss of eyesight. It is the misunderstandings which occur, the misconceptions which exist. Only when those misunderstandings are corrected,

when those misconceptions are erased, does opportunity become a reality. Utilization of new techniques extends Iowa's **NEW WORLD** of understanding.

Jointly sponsored by the Commission for the Blind and the fraternities and sororities of Drake University, the first "Teach-In on Blindness" ever staged was held in Des Moines in October 1970. More than 1,000 members of the public attended the three hour session designed to replace fantasy with fact. Drake students distributed 100,000 informational leaflets and nationwide television coverage occurred--symbolizing the **NEW WORLD** of opportunity being pioneered by the blind of Iowa.

An exciting new project initiated during fiscal 1971 was the Commission for the Blind Radio Talking Book Service. KDPS, the radio station of the Des Moines Public School System devoted four and one half hours of broadcast time daily to items of special interest to blind persons--editorials and syndicated columns from the *Des Moines Register and Tribune*, news about training and services available to the blind, and accounts of what blind people in other places are doing--creating a **NEW WORLD** of information for the blind. It is planned that this service will be continued and expanded during the present and succeeding fiscal years.

In 1958 the total program of the Commission for the Blind was housed in three cramped rooms. The 1959 Legislature purchased what was then the old YMCA building in Des Moines. It soon became the new Commission for the Blind Building. Over the years extensive remodeling and alteration of the facility

has created a modern seven story building which is unique in programs for the blind. People have come from throughout the world to study the features and innovations which have been incorporated into its nearly 100,000 square feet of floor space. A key concept in the NEW WORLD of hope is that blindness can be reduced to the level of a physical nuisance, if quality training is provided and opportunity exists. Completion of the Commission for the Blind Building during fiscal 1971 assures the blind of Iowa such training and opportunity in the decade ahead.

That a NEW WORLD exists for the blind of Iowa can be seen in the steadily increasing numbers of blind persons securing competitive employment each year. The ever widening range of fields entered bears irrefutable testimony to the fact that the blind are, indeed, a cross section of society, with all that implies. The phrase "a job a blind person can do" no longer has meaning in Iowa, for the blind are now working in every phase of industry and the professions--truly a NEW WORLD.

Blind persons, like sighted persons, have varying abilities, capacities and interests. Some achieve full self-support or support of a family. Others become competent housewives. Still others are capable of only partial self-support--each finding his own NEW WORLD.

Through the Iowa Commission for the Blind library great literature and popular magazines, professional books and textbooks, farm journals and light novels are available to the blind--in reading rooms at the Commission, or through the mail at home. Talking books (long play discs), tapes, tape cassettes, large type, and

Braille. A resource for Iowa's more than one hundred blind students in institutions of higher learning; for the hundreds of elderly blind; and for homemakers, elementary and high school students, professionals, farmers, and factory workers.

Helping the blind achieve vocational sufficiency and social equality, the Commission library is a key factor and a prime resource in the NEW WORLD being built by the blind of the State.

The newly blinded person is likely to believe that his active life has ended. Lacking training in alternative skills and techniques, steeped in outdated notions of inability, he continually sells himself short. Students at the Orientation Center of the Iowa Commission for the Blind receive training in Braille, typing, travel with the long white cane, homemaking, operation of power machinery, and other skills. Although techniques are important, attitudes are even more critical. Accordingly, Center activities bring the individual into head-on confrontation with a wide range of activities he believes he cannot do because of blindness. Actual proof of capacity soon breaks down disbelief--building a NEW WORLD of confidence and competence.

Training at the Commission Orientation Center--and then what? For some, back to full employment immediately--factory, office, shop, homemaking. For other Center graduates (and for some who have not attended the Orientation Center at all) specific vocational training under Commission sponsorship through regular community channels--area community colleges and universities, on the job training, etc. Each

to his own NEW WORLD.

The Commission for the Blind provides a variety of devices to the blind for use in their daily living. White canes, Braille watches and clocks, specially marked games, cooking utensils and timers with Braille dials, and adapted needle threaders are examples of what is available. All of these special aids are provided to the blind person either at the Commission's cost or, in cases of vocational or other established need, at less than cost or no charge, within the limits of the Commission's resources.

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#### RECIPE OF THE MONTH

by  
Alice Fornia

[Editor's Note: Alice Fornia is an active member of the San Francisco Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of California.]

#### LUNCHEON DESSERT

8 Heath candy bars  
1 pint of Cool Whip  
vanilla extract (optional)  
12 lady fingers sliced in half

Crush or crumble Heath bars, be careful not to crush into powder or too fine. Small chunks make a chewier filling. Use a blender, a rolling pin, or cut into fine chunks with a paring knife. Line 9-inch pie plate with halves of lady fingers.

Combine crushed candy bars with Cool Whip. Add vanilla to taste if desired. Spoon into lady-finger lined pie plate and place in refrigerator. Filling will become

firm and dessert can be cut in pie-shaped pieces. Remember to keep dessert in refrigerator when not serving.

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#### MONITOR MINIATURES

The Officers of the National Federation of the Blind and the Editors of *The Braille Monitor* extend their warmest thanks to all who sent them Seasons Greetings and regret that it is not possible to answer them all personally. To each of you we extend our wishes for a healthy, peaceful, active New Year.

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Effective December 1, 1971, California passed on the automatic increase in aid payments dictated by the increase in the cost-of-living index of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The increases were \$6 in Aid to the Blind and \$5 in Old Age Security and Aid to the Disabled. The minimum grant (aid plus non-exempt income) in Aid to the Blind is now \$165 and the maximum grant \$215.

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A team of British researchers has been sent to the Dahlak Islands in the Red Sea to find out why half of the Island's 3,000 inhabitants are blind.

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H. R. 1, the President's Welfare Reform measure, was passed by the House last June 22nd. It has rested in the Senate Finance Committee for ten months, but it is expected to be reported out (the Senate's version) about March of this year.

In the meantime the States are experiencing increasing fiscal pressures as a result of the mounting welfare costs. This has resulted in a reduction in the level of assistance payments in about twenty states. In November, 1971 Rep. Collins, joined by Ways and Means Committee Chairman Wilbur Mills, introduced H. R. 11586. This provides that the Federal Government would assume all increases in the State matching costs for assistance payments which are in excess of the State costs for the year ending June 30, 1971. This huge "windfall" for the States will undoubtedly put tremendous pressure on the Senate Finance Committee to take the action soon.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Jack Yeaman, a staff member of the Utah State Board of Education, writes: "I have only light perception and use a long white cane for mobility. Late in September I received a notice to report for jury duty. I appeared in the courtroom using my white cane and, with six hundred other citizens, I was sworn in as a potential juror. I was one of twenty-six selected from the six hundred to appear on the following day for potential service on a jury case. I appeared, again with my white cane, and was ultimately selected as one of eight chosen from the original twenty-six to serve on the jury. The judge, the clerk, the lawyers, and all others concerned were well aware of my blindness, but seemed not to be disturbed by this fact. I continued to serve on the jury until it was dismissed." Most encouraging news!

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Following the Executive Committee

meeting in late November at the NFB headquarters, the members scattered from the Des Moines airport to all parts of the country during Sunday. A snow storm began about 11:00 a.m. The Editor of *The Monitor* was the last one to leave, having a reservation on a 6:05 p.m. flight to Sacramento. We boarded at 5:45 but instead of leaving at 6:05, we sat at the gate for an hour and a half. The first delay was to wait for a connecting flight from Cedar Rapids. Then the wings iced up and had to be de-iced. Finally, when the minimum ceiling had been reached, the pilot began taxiing out to the runway for a take-off. However, because of the white stuff all over the ground he ran off the runway and the huge plane became stuck in the mud. The Editor slept in Des Moines that night, not in Sacramento. You win some and you lose some!

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For its significant contributions to the blind, the volunteer operated Twin Vision Publishing Division of the American Brotherhood for the Blind has been named Citationist in the National Volunteer Awards competition sponsored by the National Center for Voluntary Action. Since beginning in 1960, Twin Vision has published an impressive list of children's books and other items which read in both Braille and regular print on opposite pages. This makes it possible for the sighted to read to the blind, for the blind to read to the sighted, or for both of them to read together. An additional citation has also been awarded to Jean Scott Neel for helping to pioneer Twin Vision's unique concept and for her tireless efforts, without pay, as author and illustrator of the series.

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The Telephone Pioneers of America are celebrating their sixtieth anniversary. With some 350,000 members in the United States and Canada, the organization is the world's largest voluntary association of industrial employees. Members are active and retired Telephone company and Western Electric employees with twenty-one or more years of service. Pioneers are active in community service projects including the repair of talking book machines, the collection of eyeglasses for the needy, and a new program for loaning Braille typewriters.

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*Playboy* magazine, famous for its eye-filling displays of female pulchritude, is now available in an edition for the blind. The Braille edition is published by the Library of Congress.

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The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness estimates that of the 35,000 more Americans who will become blind this year, half will lose their sight needlessly. One of the recent breakthroughs in the preventive field is a regulation issued by the Food and Drug Administration, effective January 1, 1972, which requires that all eyeglasses and sunglasses manufactured or sold in the United States must have impact-resistant lenses.

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In Illinois Governor Ogilvie's veto of a bill which would have required welfare recipients to be residents of the State for one year before they are eligible for aid

remained in effect after the Illinois House of Representatives failed to join the State Senate in voting to override the veto. The Governor had vetoed the bill on the grounds that such requirements have been declared unconstitutional by the courts.

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The South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind has just published a very attractive folder listing its State-wide services, the services of the individual chapters, and the Aurora Center services. Copies can be obtained by writing to the Aurora Center, 119 S. Kilbourne Road, Columbia, S. C. 29205.

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A three-judge Federal Court in Rhode Island ruled unconstitutional a law enacted last July by the Rhode Island Legislature which required one-year residence in the State for eligibility for public welfare aid. The Court found the statute "in violation of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U. S. Constitution." The precedent-setting U. S. Supreme Court decision of two years ago left a small and undefined loophole by referring to a "compelling State interest" and the Rhode Island Legislature sought to meet that requirement with a lengthy preamble to the statute embellishing a claim of a "severe budgetary crisis." But the Federal Court opinion rejected the legal validity of the preamble. "Accepting the legislative findings set forth in the act's preamble as true," the court said, "it is manifest that the act's existence is predicated on economic factors. Such factors cannot show a compelling state interest which would justify infringement on the

fundamental right" of indigent persons to travel from one state to another.

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It seems that *Monitor* readers are also coin collectors. Some have questions which others of you may be able to answer. Are there coin-holder books in Braille or bold type? If so, where can they be obtained? What kinds of adaptions have been made in materials used by sighted collectors? If you have answers to these questions or other information which might be useful to blind collectors, please write to the Editors.

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Bonnie Lanzet graduated last June from Jersey City State College in New Jersey after going to college for seven and a half years. Blind from birth, Bonnie was a special education major and a volunteer tutor at St. Joseph's School for the Blind. "I didn't originally want to go into special ed," says Bonnie, "just because I was blind. I wanted to stay away from a field that seems attractive mainly because it deals with a handicap. I don't particularly look upon my blindness as a handicap, it's more of a nuisance, a rotten nuisance." She stresses the fact that since she's never known sight, she doesn't feel she's really lost anything. "I really can't measure what I miss. To myself, I seem normal. I hate it when people say, oh, that's wonderful to be blind, to go to college, to work, when I only do what everybody else does. To assume that a blind person can't do what everybody else does or that it's extraordinary when one can, is more of an insult than praise." To Bonnie, her handicap is a fact of life that has to be adjusted to. "Everyone has some

difficulties in his life," she says. "Being blind is just one sort of problem among many." Eventually Bonnie hopes to become a vocational rehabilitation counselor. "I like counseling. It doesn't limit you to a routine everyday. It keeps you from falling into a rut and it gives you a chance to help people." She graduated in style, cum laude, with a 3.52 average out of a possible 4.0. [Reprinted by courtesy of *The Jersey Journal*, Jersey City, New Jersey.]

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[The following is reprinted by courtesy of the San Jose (California) *Mercury*.] John O'Neill, a practicing locksmith, is president of his local Lions' Club, an organization dedicated to helping the sightless. Before he enrolled in the club he had only partial sight and he knew he was going blind. He stuck with the Lions because of the club's work with the blind and its San Francisco eye clinic. At that eye clinic, persons without means can get free cornea transplants and the chance to see again. He hopes to get the club more active in getting others to donate their eyes and to help senior citizens during his term of office. He hopes to help senior citizens meet some of the needs they have that otherwise they can't afford. Blind as a result of diabetes, John O'Neill runs a locksmith shop in San Francisco.

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Edythe Williams, a stenographer in the New York State Department of Social Services for thirty-four years, was recently honored at a luncheon by her fellow workers. She is a graduate of the Batavia School for the Blind, and began work as the only blind stenographer working for

the State; at this time there are still very few blind stenographers working for the State. Miss Williams, who uses a Braille writer, has always been known for her high quality of work. Among other things, she is president of the board of the Albany Association of the Blind, vice-president of the Tri-City Council of the Blind, secretary of the Empire State Association of the Blind, member and trophy holder of the Capital District Blind Bowlers Association, and member of the Business Girls' Club, Albany Blind Institute. Her sister Ruth is also employed by the New York State Department of Social Services in the Albany Area Office as a home teacher for the blind.

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Marge Gallien reports from Colorado that Santa Claus came on roller skates. So did the seventy-five youngsters and twenty-one adults who attended the party that the NFB of Colorado Springs gave for all the blind kids at the Colorado Deaf and Blind School. The kids had loads of fun and even the adults put on skates and found them easy to use. The success of the party was entirely attributable to Santa himself--at board meetings better known as Col. Ralph Meline. He and the elves at his household rounded up over a hundred pounds of candy, plus huge quantities of toys and other goodies, and packaged them so each child had a pound of candy and a number of toys suited to the age, sex, and degree of blindness of the particular youngster. Leftover goodies were for those above the Santa Claus age at the Deaf and Blind School. Marge Gallien says "It was by far the best party we've ever had, except that we all caught roller skate fever and would like to try it again."

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G. K. Hall and Co. of Boston is announcing to all U.S. and Canadian libraries an entirely new publishing program. Over seventy large print editions of current best-selling fiction and non-fiction will be available in 1971-1972. Librarians can now establish or add to their large print collections today's best-selling fiction and non-fiction by today's most highly regarded authors. Currently there are over 18,000,000 Americans who have difficulty reading standard size print or who cannot read it at all. And yet--of the 305,000 printed books available in 1970, only 1500--or less than one-half of one percent were in large print. Rarely can a best-seller be found among the 1500. Clearly citizens with reading difficulties do not have a suitable choice of reading materials. The G. K. Hall program will for the first time provide that choice.

Designed for maximum eye ease and attractive appearance, the first list of the hard-bound, standard size books will feature such current best-sellers as *Addie Pray* by Joe David Brown, *The Underground Man* by Ross Macdonald, and *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* by Ernest J. Gaines. New non-fiction titles are *The Quality of Life* by James Michener, and *My Life and Prophecies* by Jeane Dixon as told to Rene Noorbergen. Also available in 1971 will be new books by such famous authors as P. G. Wodehouse (*Jeeves and the Tie that Binds*), Robert Nathan (*The Elixir*), and Max Brand (*Ambush at Torture Canyon*). John Updike's new book of short stories, *Pigeon Feathers*, will be available, as well as 1971 mysteries--*A Question of Time* (Helen McCloy), *Stranger*, *Tread Light* (Jean Muir), and *Fenner* (George Harmon Coxe). All may be ordered directly from the publisher.

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